Oct. 13, 1986

THE NEW YORKER

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My first list of what I like and don't like about Christmas.

My dislikes.

My likes.

1. Women who hang around under the mistletoe.

2. I like having an excuse to express how I feel about poinsettias.

3. Santa.

4. I like those few moments when people with nothing to gain are nice to each othe

5. I like watching my dogs open their presents.

6. I like a Christmas list with something to it—a peerage, a trout stream, perfume. Mine, of course.

7. And I love when it's all over.

Bill Blass

Bill Blass for women

Perfume. Cologne. Cologne Spray

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

ANGRY HOUSEWIVES—A boring musical about four dissatisfied women who form a rock group. The closing number is funny, but there's a long, long wait. (Reviewed in our issue of 9/29/86.) (Minetta Lane, 18-22 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

ARSENIC AND OLD LACE—This revival of a 1941 Broadway hit has a big cast and an exceptionally fine set, by Marjorie Bradley Kellogg. The subject is murder, mingled with Victorian good manners; the murder weapon is elderberry wine. (7/7/86) (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

CARMILLA—A revival of a chamber opera adapted by Wilford Leach from a novel by J. S. Le Fanu. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. Wednesdays through Sundays at 8.)

CIRCLE REPERTORY COMPANY—Presenting two plays in rotating repertory—**IN THIS FALLEN CITY:** Bryan Williams' mystery, set in East Harlem, is not as gripping as it should be in spite of excellent performances by Michael Higgins and Danton Stone. (10/6/86). . . . **THE EARLY GIRL:** By Caroline Kava, in previews. (Circle Repertory Company Theatre, 99 Seventh Ave. S. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. For information about play scheduling, call 924-7100.)

CONFESSIONS OF A NIGHTINGALE—Ray Stricklyn as Tennessee Williams in a one-man play adapted by Charlotte Chandler and Mr. Stricklyn from Miss Chandler's book "The Ultimate Seduction." (Audrey Wood, 359 W. 48th St. 307-5452. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

DOUBLE IMAGE THEATRE—Presenting two plays in repertory—**THE RETURN OF PINOCCHIO,** by Richard Nelson. (10/6/86) Wednesdays through Fridays, and Saturday, Oct. 18. . . . **THE DREAMER EXAMINES HIS PILLOW,** by John Patrick Shanley. Saturdays, Oct. 11 and 18; Sunday, Oct. 12; and Tuesday, Oct. 14. (304 W. 47th St. 265-0794. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

EQUITY LIBRARY THEATRE—Noël Coward's 1951 comedy, "Relative Values," is the first in the season's series of eight productions. (103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Nightly at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 2:30. Closes Sunday, Oct. 12. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)

GROUCHO: A LIFE IN REVUE—Frank Ferrante portrays Groucho Marx in a play written by Arthur Marx and Robert Fisher. Opens Wednesday, Oct. 8. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Opening-night curtain at 6:30; thereafter, Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

THE HOUSE OF BLUE LEAVES—A superb revival of John Guare's brilliant, ferocious comedy, with Swoosie Kurtz and John Mahoney, among other fine performers. Jerry Zaks was the acute, perceptive director. Reopens on Tuesday, Oct. 14. (3/31/86) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

THE IMPOSTOR (IF I WERE REAL)—A satire by Sha Yexin, Li Shoucheng, and Yao Mingde. A

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presentation of the Pan Asian Repertory Theatre. (Playhouse 46, 423 W. 46th St. 245-2660. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2.)

KRAPP'S LAST TAPE—A disappointing revival of Samuel Beckett's play. Reopens Tuesday, Oct. 14. (9/15/86) (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

LADY DAY AT EMERSON'S BAR & GRILL—A play of sorts about one of Billie Holiday's last engagements, at a night club in Philadelphia, well sung and performed by the personable Lonette McKee, who bears no resemblance—vocal, physical, or temperamental—to the late Miss Holiday. (9/29/86) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 3.)

LAMBS THEATRE COMPANY—**THE CHINA FISH,** a play by David McFadzean, is the first in this season's series of three productions. (Little Theatre at the Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2 and 8; Thursdays at 11 A.M. and 8; and Fridays at 8.)

THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF NICHOLAS NICKLEBY—Never does time fly past more agreeably than during the eight hours it takes the Royal Shakespeare Company to act out Dickens' welcomely preposterous account of making it in nineteenth-century England. (9/1/86) The play is presented in two parts, and tickets are available only in consecutive two-performance combinations. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Wednesday at 2 and 7; Thursday and Friday at 7; and Saturday and Sunday at 2 and 7. Closes Sunday, Oct. 12.)

LIGHT OPERA OF MANHATTAN—Presenting **THE VAGABOND KING,** by Rudolf Friml. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2, and Saturdays and Sundays at 3:30.)

LILLIAN WALD, AT HOME ON HENRY STREET—A play by Clare Coss, about the founder of the Henry Street Settlement. With Patricia Elliott in the title role. Opens officially on Friday, Oct. 10. (Harry De Jur Henry Street Settlement Playhouse, 466 Grand St. 598-0400. Thursdays through Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

ME AND MY GIRL—Robert Lindsay brings to life a silly chestnut of a British musical, dating back to the thirties. The production will run for as long as Lindsay is able and willing to run, which one hopes will be for several years. (8/25/86) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 947-0033. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

MUMMENSCHANZ—A very welcome return engagement, after several years' absence, of the trio of performers who, disguised as objects that might well have fallen to earth from outer space, behave in a touchingly human fashion as they slink mysteriously about the stage. They astonish audiences into laughte

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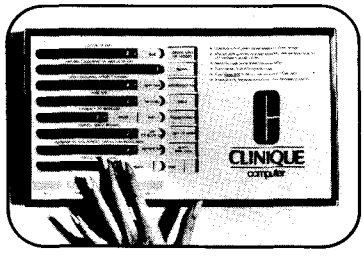

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

and, like the creatures in "Alice in Wonderland," make us happy by means beyond our comprehension. Characteristically, the name of the show stands for anything you would like it to stand for. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 2 and 5:30. Closes Sunday, Oct. 26.)

Olympus on My Mind—A larky little musical based on the Amphitryon legend, with Martin Vidnovic, doubling as the General and the usurping Jupiter, and Elizabeth Austin, as a chorus girl who happens to be the "wife" of one of the "producers." Music by Grant Sturiale, and words (book and lyrics) by Barry Harman, who also directed. (8/18/86) (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

The Perfect Party—A. R. Gurney, Jr.,'s deliberately mannered comedy about a professor who is obsessed with perfection is often disappointing, but just as often Mr. Gurney's wit and high spirits break through the Wildean mold to redeem it. The acting by John Cunningham, Debra Mooney, and Charlotte Moore is very good. John Tillinger directed. (4/14/86) (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 3.)

Raggedy Ann—A musical with a book by William Gibson and score and lyrics by Joe Raposo. Patricia Birch is the director and choreographer. Previews through Wednesday, Oct. 15. Opens officially on Thursday, Oct. 16. (Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Rowan Atkinson at the Atkinson—Mr. Atkinson and Angus Deayton, two British comedians, in a show written by Dick Curtis, Ben Elton, and Mr. Atkinson. Mike Ochrent is the director. Previews through Monday, Oct. 13. Opens officially on Tuesday, Oct. 14. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 719-4099. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8; opening-night curtain at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 2.)

Sex Tips for Modern Girls—A musical with a book by Peter Eliot Weiss and score and lyrics by John Sereda. (Susan Bloch, 307 W. 26th St. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3. For tickets, call 541-8394.)

Social Security—An exceptionally attractive cast—Marlo Thomas, Ron Silver, Joanna Gleason, Olympia Dukakis, and Stefan Schnabel—in a comedy by Andrew Bergman, directed by Mike Nichols. (4/28/86) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Sweet Charity—Debbie Allen, well assisted by a big cast, stars in a revival of a musical that has come to seem an American classic. Bob Fosse is the director and choreographer, Cy Coleman and Dorothy Fields provided the songs, and the scenery is by Robert Randolph. Hurrah for them all. (5/12/86) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 869-0550. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Today, I Am a Fountain Pen—A play by Israel Horovitz. (890 Theatre, Broadway at 19th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Thursday, Oct. 9, at 8:15. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30, and Sundays at 2.)

You Never Can Tell—A revival of Shaw's comedy, with Philip Bosco, Victor Garber, Stefan Gierasch, Uta Hagen, and Amanda Plummer. Stephen Porter is the director. Previews Wednesday, Oct 8. Opens officially Thursday, Oct. 9. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:45. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Young Playwrights Festival—The entries of three young dramatists, still in their teens, make this annual festival a very cheerful occasion. Their names are Carolyn Jones, Eve

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Goldfarb, and Evan Smith. Anne Pitoniak, Greg Germann, Kelly Wolf, and Tom Mardirosian, well out of their teens, are among the splendid actors. Art Wolff, Mary B. Robinson, and Ron Lagormarsino were the directors. (10/6/86) (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Wednesday through Saturday at 8, and Sunday at 7. Matinées Saturday at 3 and Sunday at 2. Closes Sunday, Oct. 12.)

Long Runs—Big River: A musical about Huckleberry Finn and Jim and their adventures on the Mississippi. The large cast is full of charm and so is the scenery, by Heidi Landesman. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **La Cage aux Folles:** A big, handsomely designed and handsomely costumed musical. The book, by Harvey Fierstein, is sentimental nonsense, but the music, by Jerry Herman, is pleasantly tuneful. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **Cats:** A musical version of T. S. Eliot's "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats." Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, choreography by Gillian Lynne, and direction (and some lyrics) by Trevor Nunn. A superb spectacle, which may run for many more years and give cats the right to vote and hold office. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A Chorus Line:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **The Fantasticks:** 11,008 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **42nd Street:** Pleasantly old-fashioned choreography by the late Gower Champion and a few classic songs enliven an otherwise inert pastiche of the Warner Brothers movie that made Ruby Keeler a star. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **I'm Not Rappaport:** Herb Gardner's synthetic, though often entertaining, comedy about two old men who share a bench in Central Park, starring Hal Linden and Ossie Davis. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **Little Shop of Horrors:** Based on Roger Corman's 1960 horror quickie about a man-eating plant, this exuberant, jokey musical is wholly free of camp. The score is by Alan Menken, and Howard Ashman directed and wrote the book and lyrics. Martin P. Robinson designed the menacing plant. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 2 and 5.) . . . **The Mystery of Edwin Drood:** Charles Dickens' novel served as a basis for this jolly, silly musical, with charming songs by Rupert Holmes, an excellent cast headed by George Rose, and uninhibited direction by Wilford Leach. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **Nunsense:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **Oh! Calcutta!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 302-2302. Mondays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **Penn & Teller:** A sublime combination of conjuring and comedy. Penn Jillette does the talking, Teller is silent. After Sunday, Oct. 12, no performances until Thursday, Oct. 23. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Wednesday through Friday at 8; Saturday at 7 and 10; and Sunday at 7. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 3.) . . . **Song & Dance:** Betty Buckley sings a lot and John Meehan dances a lot, but their labors are fruitless—this is a musical without a story and almost without any characters. Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, lyrics by Don Black. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

MISCELLANY

Beehive—A musical revue, featuring songs of the sixties. (Top of the Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 982-9292. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Forbidden Broadway 1986—A musical satire of Shubert Alley denizens. The lyrics to the song parodies are by Gerard Alessandrini. (Palsson's Upstairs, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8:30; Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30 and 11:30; and Sundays at 8:30.)

Next Wave Festival—The avant-garde, nineteen-eighties-style, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music—The Merce Cunningham Dance Company in "Roaratorio," created in collaboration with John Cage; "Inlets 2," another Cunningham-Cage venture, completes the bill. (Opera House. Wednesday through Saturday, Oct. 8-11, at 8, and Sunday, Oct. 12, at 2.) . . . ¶ The New York première of "Social Amnesia," a production by the Impossible Theatre, of Baltimore, and John Schneider, of Milwaukee's Theatre X. (Lepercq Space. Tuesday, Oct. 14, at 7; Wednesday through Saturday, Oct. 15-18, at 8; and Sunday, Oct. 19, at 2.) . . . ¶ Jon Hassell's Concert Group performing compositions by Mr. Hassell. (Carey Playhouse. Friday and Saturday, Oct. 17-18, at 8.) (30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Through Tuesday, Dec. 30.)

DANCE

Joffrey Ballet—Opening performances of a five-week engagement that will run through Sunday, Nov. 16—Thursday, Oct. 16, at 7:30, and Friday and Saturday, Oct. 17-18, at 8: "La Fille Mal Gardée." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989.)

Feld Ballet—Wednesday evening, Oct. 8: "Harbinger," "Echo," "Adieu," and "The Jig Is Up." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, Oct. 9: "The Grand Canon," "Echo," "Theatre," and "Straw Hearts." . . . ¶ Friday evening, Oct. 10: "Harbinger," "Echo," "Adieu," and "Straw Hearts." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, Oct. 11: "The Grand Canon," "Medium: Rare," "Theatre," and "Skara Brae" (première). . . . ¶ Sunday matinée, Oct. 12: "Straw Hearts," "Theatre," and "The Jig Is Up." . . . ¶ Sunday evening, Oct. 12: "Harbinger," "Echo," "Over the Pavement," and "Skara Brae."

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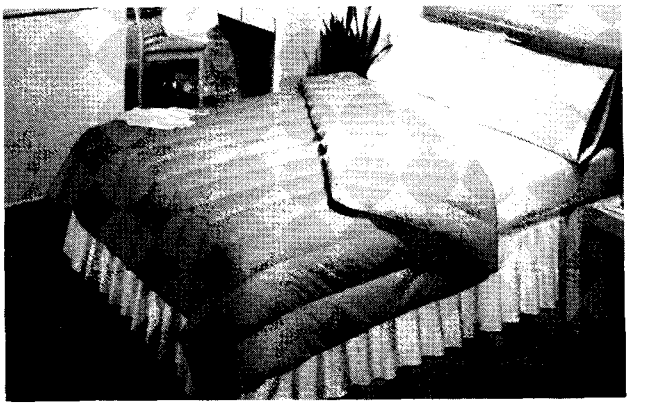

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

. . . ¶ Tuesday evening, Oct. 14: "Harbinger," "Medium: Rare," "Adieu," and "Bent Planes" (première). . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, Oct. 15: "Bent Planes," "Echo," "Adieu," and "The Jig Is Up." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, Oct. 16: "Aurora I," "Echo," "Over the Pavement," and "Skara Brae." . . . ¶ Friday evening, Oct. 17: "Harbinger," "Medium: Rare," "Return to Maria La Baja," and "Straw Hearts." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, Oct. 18: "The Grand Canon," "Echo," "Adieu," and "The Jig Is Up." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. On Wednesday, Oct. 8, at 7; thereafter, Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées at 2. Through Sunday, Oct. 26.)

New York Theatre Ballet—"Salome: Dance of the VII Veils," "The Little Humpbacked Horse," "Revision," "An Eccentric Beauty Revisited," and "Terpsichore Explained: A Lecture." (Theatre of the Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. 864-2929. Wednesday, Oct. 15, and Friday, Oct. 17, at 8, and Sunday, Oct. 19, at 2.)

CoDanceCo—The first three of eight performances. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Program A, Thursday, Oct. 16, and Saturday, Oct. 18, at 8. . . . ¶ Program B, Friday, Oct. 17, at 8.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Abilene Café, 359 Second Ave., at 21st St. (473-8908)—A corner bar and restaurant that makes a polite bow in the direction of Texas (its flag flies here) and presents music that is practiced just about everywhere in the Union (the blues). **Robert (Junior) Lockwood**, a trail-blazing guitarist who grew up in eastern Arkansas and now lives in Cleveland, pays a visit on Saturday, Oct. 11. Little Buster is also on the bill that evening, as well as on Friday, Oct. 10. Other bluespeople can be heard every night except Sunday. Music from nine.

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**Julie Wilson** is in the Oak Room, concentrating on the songs of Harold Arlen. She sings at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen Tuesdays through Saturdays. Dining.

Angry Squire, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—A nautically appointed bar and restaurant. Any swaying you may notice yourself doing is probably generated by the musicians, who perform amidships on a railed-in platform. Pianist **John Hicks'** trio is on hand Friday and Saturday, Oct. 10-11, and on Friday and Saturday, Oct. 17-18, trumpeter **Jack Walrath**, bassist **Anthony Cox**, and drummer **Ronnie Burrage** will be your cruising companions. The other nights are given over to other combos. Sets begin Sundays through Thursdays at nine-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at ten.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A sleek, carpeted, neat-as-a-pin music room, which will also be hushed and smokeless during **Blossom Dearie's** early-bird concerts. She sings her first note at six-thirty Wednesdays through Saturdays. Starting Tuesday, Oct. 14, at nine, harmonica virtuoso **Larry Adler** and his nifty accompanist, **Ellis Larkins**, take the stage, and starting Wednesday, Oct. 15, at eleven, **Steve Ross** sings and accompanies himself on the piano.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—On the back wall of this club, there is a little neon version of the Manhattan skyline, with a crescent moon and two stars attendant upon the RCA Building—one of the best examples of inert-gas folk art we know of. **Carmen McRae** is singing with her trio through Sunday, Oct. 12, and on Tuesday, Oct. 14, the fleet-fingered **Oscar Peterson** arrives with his quartet (guitarist **Joe Pass**, bassist **Bob Cranshaw**, and drummer **Martin Drew**). Music from nine, except during Mr. Peterson's residence, when it begins at ten. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Rock, jazz, folk music, comedy, and combinations thereof. On Wednesdays, Oct. 8

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and 15, the loose-limbed, wavy-haired lounge singer named **Buster Poindexter** (the persona adopted by proto punk-rocker David Johansen) sings songs that you aren't likely to hear at a Holiday Inn. His four adept, tuxedoed **Banshees of Blue** back him up. The rest of the schedule: Friday, Oct. 10, Marti Jones and Dump Truck; Saturday, Oct. 11, **Bonnie Koloc** and John Hiatt, with Howard Levy; and Thursday through Sunday, Oct. 16-19, the jazz-rock band **Steps Ahead**. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A crowded, duskily lit neighborhood bar, where first-rate pianists and bassists compete for your ear with professional conversationalists. Truth and beauty usually prevail. The musical teams: **Joanne Brackeen** and **Cecil McBee** through Saturday, Oct. 11, and starting Monday, Oct. 13, **Kenny Barron** and a bassist to be named later. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlos I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—Everything about this little club is nice: the long rows of tables covered with pink linen, the bijou bandstand, the view from the bar of the bandstand, and the view out the window of Vaux & Withers' gabled Victorian courthouse. **Ernestine Anderson**, who has something of Dinah Washington's blues-shouting forthrightness in her, is singing every night but Monday. Shows at nine and eleven, with an extra show at twelve-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays. No music Mondays. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—**Bobby Short** is at his old post in the Café Carlyle, singing and playing the piano and touching off mirth and jubilation in his audience. **Beverly Peer** (bass fiddle) and **Robbie Scott** (drums) are his trusty sidekicks. Sets at ten and midnight Tuesdays through Saturdays. . . . ¶ In the Bemelmans Bar, you can listen to pianist and singer **Barbara Carroll** Tuesdays through Saturdays from nine-forty-five.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Exposed rafters, weathered splintery wood posts, decrepit neon beer signs, and a general ramshackle feel. All this and rock and roll, too. Sundays and Mondays are showcase nights. Shows nightly from long after nine-thirty.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—Through a heavy-duty steel door, down a long, narrow, fun-house passageway (mirrors in which you can watch yourself multiply; corrugated-metal siding that you can riffle), and down a flight of stairs, you'll find this velvet-and-mirror-walled *boîte*. Pianist and drawling, droll vocalist **Mose Allison** performs through Sunday, Oct. 12; guitarist **Kevin Eubanks** will be present on Tuesday and Wednesday, Oct. 14-15; and pop-jazz singer **Kenny Rankin** goes to work on Thursday, Oct. 16. On Mondays, **Les Paul** plugs in his guitar and plays with his trio. Sets begin at nine. Dining.

Freddy's, 308 E. 49th St. (888-1633)—At eight, through Saturday, Oct. 11, singer-comedienne Maxine Lapiduss does impressions of celebrities (Lauren Bacall, Tina Turner, her mother), and at nine-thirty every night except Sunday the pulchritudinous singer and multi-instrumentalist **Phoebe Légère** (who, at various moments during her routine, may remind you of Marlene Dietrich, Jerry Lee Lewis, and the supercilious Shelley Long character in "Cheers") performs Cole Porter songs, ancient blues, and "My Yiddishe Momme." Dining.

Greene Street, 101 Greene St. (925-2415)—Once a truck warehouse, this SoHo establishment now provides space for palm trees to mature in and for non-trucking types to eat and drink and listen to good pianists. Through Saturday, Oct. 11, **Larry Vuckovich**; Tuesday through Saturday, Oct. 14-18, **Hal Schaefer**; Sundays, **Andy Laverne**; and Mondays, Peter Malinverni. Sets begin at seven Mondays through Thursdays, at seven-thirty Fridays and Saturdays, and at six on Sundays.

Gregory's 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—Alicia Sherman sings with support from pianist Richard Sussman and bassist Frank Wagner through Saturday, Oct. 11, and from Mr. Sussman and Phil Bowler beginning Wednesday, Oct. 15. On Sundays and Mondays, Joe Derise sings and plays piano with accompaniment from bassist John Dooley, and on Tuesdays guitarist **Chuck Wayne**, pianist **Warren Chiasson**, and bassist **Michael Fleming** collaborate. All these groups begin about ten.

Knickerbocker Saloon, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Turn-of-the-century New York Sunday *Herald* posters and Hirschfeld caricatures on the walls, and, next to the brass-railed partition between the bar and the dining room, a modern Steinway. **Hilton Ruiz** works out on it (with bassist **Ray Drummond** next to him) through Saturday, Oct. 11, and on Tuesday, Oct. 14, the Polish-born, Tatum-influenced pianist **Adam Makowicz** takes charge (with bassist **Jamil Nasser** at his side). Esther Blue holds forth on Sundays and Mondays. Music from about nine-thirty.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—Texas-like in significant respects, though not in the open-spaces-and-clear-sight-lines department, in which it is New York-like. Wednesday, Oct. 8, Mercy Seat, a glittery, breakneck-tempo punk-gospel band, headed by Gordon Gano of the Violent Femmes; Thursday through Saturday, Oct. 9-11, the **Radiators** (with the **Ben Vaughn Combo** on Friday and Saturday); Monday, Oct. 13, the king of West Texas nuevo wavo, **Joe (King) Carrasco**, and blues guitarist **Lonnie Brooks**; and Wednesday and Thursday, Oct. 15-16, **Steve Forbert**. Music after nine. Dining.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A mid-Manhattan club, hard by a black steel-and-glass skyscraper. The New York Jazz Repertory Ensemble is on the bandstand at nine and eleven Tuesdays through Saturdays. On most Mondays, Woody Allen sits in on clarinet with a New Orleans-style outfit after nine-thirty. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Mikell's, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—A popular, north-of-chic upper West Side gathering place. Jazz, Latin jazz, and rhythm and blues are what the people come inside for. The roster: Wednesday, Oct. 8, Justin Page; Thursday, Oct. 9, the Jan Leder quartet; Friday and Saturday, Oct. 10-11, pianist **McCoy Tyner**; Monday, Oct. 13, Eastern Standard Time; Tuesday, Oct. 14, Top Shelf; Thursday, Oct. 16, **Papo Vasquez**; and Friday and Saturday, Oct. 17-18, R. & B. aces **Cornell Dupree** and **Richard Tee**. Music from about ten until two. Dining.

Ritz, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Rock and rock-related phenomena from the fifties to the eighties in a half-century-old ballroom. Friday, Oct. 10, at eight-thirty and midnight, Third World; Saturday, Oct. 11, 10,000 Maniacs and 54/40; Thursday, Oct 16, the computer-generated smirking talk-show host Max Headroom and Death Comet; Friday, Oct. 17, the Smithereens; and

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Saturday, Oct. 18, **BILLY PRESTON** and Mazarati. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at eleven. Dancing.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—Exotic, head-swirling music from Brazil and elsewhere in an exotic *carnaval* setting. When an African all-percussion ensemble parades by your table, you may feel like joining it. Wednesday and Thursday, Oct. 8-9, Argentinian saxophonist **GATO BARBIERI;** Friday through Sunday, Oct. 10-12, the power-samba band **PÉ-DE-BOI;** Tuesday, Oct. 14, Moonfire; Wednesday and Thursday, Oct. 15-16, the **DAVID MURRAY BIG BAND,** conducted by **BUTCH MORRIS;** and Friday and Saturday, Oct. 17-18, **MIKATA.** Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays and on Sunday, Oct. 12, and from eleven Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Mondays.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Crowded and convivial: **ART BLAKEY** and his winged youth corps, the **JAZZ MESSENGERS,** deliver bop and hard bop through Sunday, Oct. 12. Starting Tuesday, Oct. 14, tenor saxophonist **PHAROAH SANDERS,** who has a village elder's beard and a sage visage, guides his quartet through miles of free jazz, Coltrane ballads, and West African-rooted dance music. On Mondays, the **GIL EVANS ORCHESTRA,** with its white-haired leader at the electric piano, fills the room with uplifting marching-rock-band music. Shows from about ten. Dining.

TRAMPS, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—A low-ceilinged, plain-but-functional blues and rock outpost. The decorative flourishes include pictures of Joe Turner, a Mets pennant, roadhouse neon, and a cat, which can sometimes be found atop the jukebox. The schedule: Wednesday, Oct. 8, Combo Limbo; Thursday, Oct. 9, the Cor-Vairs and the Wind; Friday and Saturday, Oct. 10-11, Chicago-blues guitarist **OTIS RUSH;** Tuesday, Oct. 14, Bagatelle; Wednesday, Oct. 15, guitarist **VERNON REID'S LIVING COLOUR;** Thursday, Oct. 16, Wanda & the Way It Is, an all-woman R. & B. outfit; and Friday and Saturday, Oct. 17-18, the catlike, table-hopping saxophonist **BIG JAY MC NEELY.** Music after nine-thirty.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—Salsa and jazz in the big downstairs room on Mondays after nine; on Oct. 13, *timbales* master **TITO PUENTE** and his Latin-Jazz Ensemble, percussionist **MONGO SANTAMARIA** and his band, trumpeter **JON FADDIS** will all be present. Dancing under the spinning mirrored ball. . . . ¶ In the Terrace Bar, you can keep an eye on Village street life and listen to pianist **JACK WILSON** and bassist **BOOTS MALESON** every night except Monday (and Friday through Sunday, Oct. 10-12, when Ed Schuller replaces Mr. Maleson). In addition, **DAPHNE HELLMAN** plays jazz harp with her combo on Tuesdays. Music from ten.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—This hallowed establishment has been receiving jazz pilgrims from all over the world for more than a half century. Trumpeter **RED RODNEY** and alto saxophonist Dick Oatts co-pilot their quartet through Sunday, Oct. 12, and on Tuesday, Oct. 14, one of this galaxy's best trios—**TOMMY FLANAGAN, GEORGE MRAZ,** and **AL FOSTER**—begins a stint. On Monday nights, the hard-swinging **MEL LEWIS ORCHESTRA** upholds the big-band tradition. Music after ten.

WEST END, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—Those who can resist the temptations of the large barroom here—pinball, the EnduroRacer, a dialogue with a budding logical positivist from Columbia U.—will find another, smaller room, where jazz musicians (mainly of the swing school) hold sway. The lineup: through Sunday, Oct. 12, the Eddie Bonnemère trio; Tuesday, Oct. 14, the Joe Chev quartet; and starting Wednesday, Oct. 15, Don Leight & the Masters of Swing. Mondays are comedy nights. Shows nightly from about nine. Dining.

WHIPPOORWILL, 18 E. 18th St. (675-7100)—The entryway to this downstairs club buzzes with black lights, the anteroom features a mural and a chaise longue on which to contemplate it, and the music-and-dining room has jazz. Tenor saxophonist **GEORGE COLEMAN** heads up a quartet through Sunday, Oct. 12, and on Tuesday, Oct. 14, pianist **AHMAD JAMAL** brings in his trio. Mondays are claimed by trumpeter Tex Allen's sextet. Music from ten. . . . ¶ The roomy upstairs bar and restaurant called Joanna (675-7900) has big mirrors, photomurals of flowers, real flower-size flowers, and a grand piano, which is in the powerful hands of **ROLAND HANNA** every night except Monday, when **HUGH LAWSON** does the honors. Music from about nine-thirty.

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ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A spacious, airy bar connected to a spacious, airy dining room by a spacious, airy passageway with tables and chairs and expert musicians in it. Pianist **HAL SCHAEFER** and bassist **HARVIE SWARTZ** inhabit the space through Saturday, Oct. 11, and on Monday, Oct. 13, longtime companions **JUNIOR MANCE** and **MARTY RIVERA** move in. On Sundays, guitarist **GENE BERTONCINI** and bassist **MICHAEL MOORE** play inspiring chamber jazz. Music weeknights from eight and Sundays from seven.

JAZZ / FOLK / ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

CRAIG HARRIS—With Pheeroan Aklaff, Don Byron, Baikida Carroll, and Anthony Cox. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Friday, Oct. 10, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

A-HA—With A=440. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 757-3100. Friday and Saturday, Oct. 10-11, at 8.)

JOHN CEPHAS, DJIMO KOUYATE, and **SELESHE DAMESSAE**—Washington Square Church, 135 W. 4th St. Friday, Oct. 10, at 8. For information about tickets, call 362-3366.

BRITISH INVASION TOUR 1986—With Gerry & the Pacemakers, Freddie & the Dreamers, the Searchers, and others. (Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden. 564-4400. Saturday, Oct. 11, at 8.)

SIMON SHAHEEN & THE NEAR EAST ENSEMBLE—Washington Square Church. Saturday, Oct. 11, at 8.

MUSIC BY KAY SWIFT—Performed by Miss Swift and twenty-five others, including Julie Wilson, Steve Ross, and William Bolcom. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Tuesday, Oct. 14, at 8.)

BILLY JOEL—Madison Square Garden. 564-4400. Wednesday, Oct. 15, and Friday and Saturday, Oct. 17-18, at 8.

LIBERACE—With the Rockettes, in the opening performances of a three-week engagement that will run through Sunday, Nov. 2. (Radio City Music Hall. Thursday, Oct. 16, at 7:30; Friday, Oct. 17, at 8; and Saturday, Oct. 18, at 2:30 and 8.)

JAZZ STRING SUMMIT—With John Blake, David Darling, Leroy Jenkins & Sting, and others. (Eisner and Lubin Auditorium, Loeb Student Center, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl. Friday, Oct. 17, at 7. For information about tickets, call 724-3256.)

CHUCK BERRY—Felt Forum. Saturday, Oct. 18, at 8.

JAZZ CENTER OF NEW YORK—Friday, Oct. 10, at 9 and 10:30: John Shaw & Assemblage. . . . ¶ Saturday, Oct. 11, at 9 and 10:30: Howard Johnson–Erica Lindsay quintet. (380 Lafayette St. 505-5660.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

ROMARE BEARDEN—Collages. Through Nov. 1. (Cordier & Ekstrom, 417 E. 75th St.)

TONY BERLANT—Three-dimensional cut-tin constructions. Through Saturday, Oct. 18. (Fourcade, 36 E. 75th St.)

JAMES BOHARY / RICHARD HICKAM—Recent abstract paintings. / Abstract paintings based on female figures. Through Oct. 29. (Stone, 48 E. 86th St.)

JUDY CHICAGO—Pencil drawings, oil paintings, bronze reliefs, hand-cast paper works, and tapestries from a new series of symbolic portraits entitled "Powerplay." Through Nov. 1. (ACA, 21 E. 67th St.)

CYRIL DAVIS—Drawings of everyday subjects—cars, people, buildings, sheep—done with extraordinary precision and a 2-H pencil. Through Saturday, Oct. 11. (Staempfli, 47 E. 77th St.)

STEPHEN DE STAEBLER—Large bronze and ceramic columns suggesting human figures. Through Nov. 1. (CDS Gallery, 13 E. 75th St. Open Mondays.)

FREDERICK KIESLER (1890-1965)—A two-gallery exhibit of works the artist called "galaxies," which are generally either paintings in sections or paintings combined with sculptures. Through Nov. 1. (Kren, 22 E. 65th St., and McCoy, 19 E. 71st St.)

MASAMI KODAMA—Abstract sculptures in polished black marble, white marble, and granite. Through Saturday, Oct. 11. (Weintraub, 992 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

LOUIS LOZOWICK (1892-1973) / **ADOLF DEHN** (1895-1968)—Forty lithographs and a few paintings and drawings. / Landscapes, mostly in watercolor. Through Oct. 25. (Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St.)

ANDRÉ MASSON—Sixty paintings, plus works on paper and sculptures. Through Nov. 20. (Kouros, 23 E. 73rd St.)

BRIDGET RILEY—Op Art paintings from the sixties, plus works done more recently. Through Nov. 8. (Hoffeld, 1020 Madison Ave., at 79th St. Open Mondays.)

JUDITH SHEA—Patinated bronze sculptures of figures (some have geometric forms attached) in various positions—sitting, reclining, standing. Through Nov. 1. (Willard, 29 E. 72nd St.)

DAVID SMITH (1906-65)—Works on paper and five metal sculptures. Through Nov. 1. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

THE SOYERS—Figure studies in charcoal and watercolor by Raphael and Moses, plus an oil by Isaac—a portrait of his son. Through Oct. 31. (Radann, 790 Madison Ave., at 67th St. Opens at noon.)

VIVIENNE THAUL WECHTER—Expressionist paintings. Through Saturday, Oct. 18. (Schiller-Wapner, 1 E. 61st St.)

ARTHUR WEYHE—An installation, made with hand-stripped white-cedar logs, that includes two large structures resembling lookout towers and numerous tall tripod forms. Through Nov. 1. (Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St.)

LAURA ZIEGLER—Figurative sculptures in bronze, wood, and polychrome terra-cotta. Through Oct. 31. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

HAROLD GREGOR—Recent paintings of Illinois farm country. Through Oct. 25. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

JOHN HARTELL—Soft-colored paintings of landscapes and figures in interiors. Through Nov. 1. (Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

JOHN HULL / MAX BECKMANN (1884-1950)—Realist paintings depicting the story of King Lear. / Prints. Through Oct. 30. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

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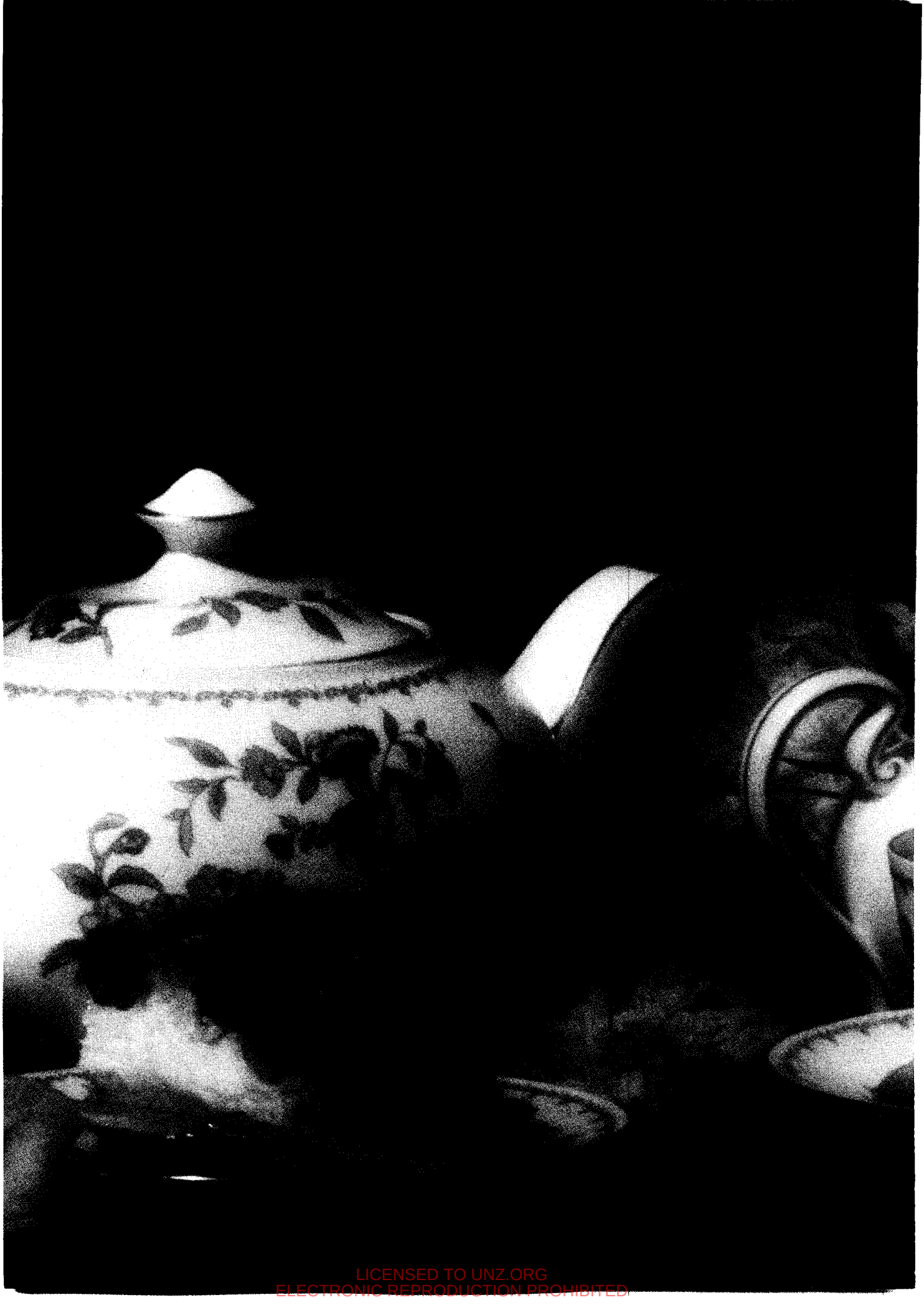

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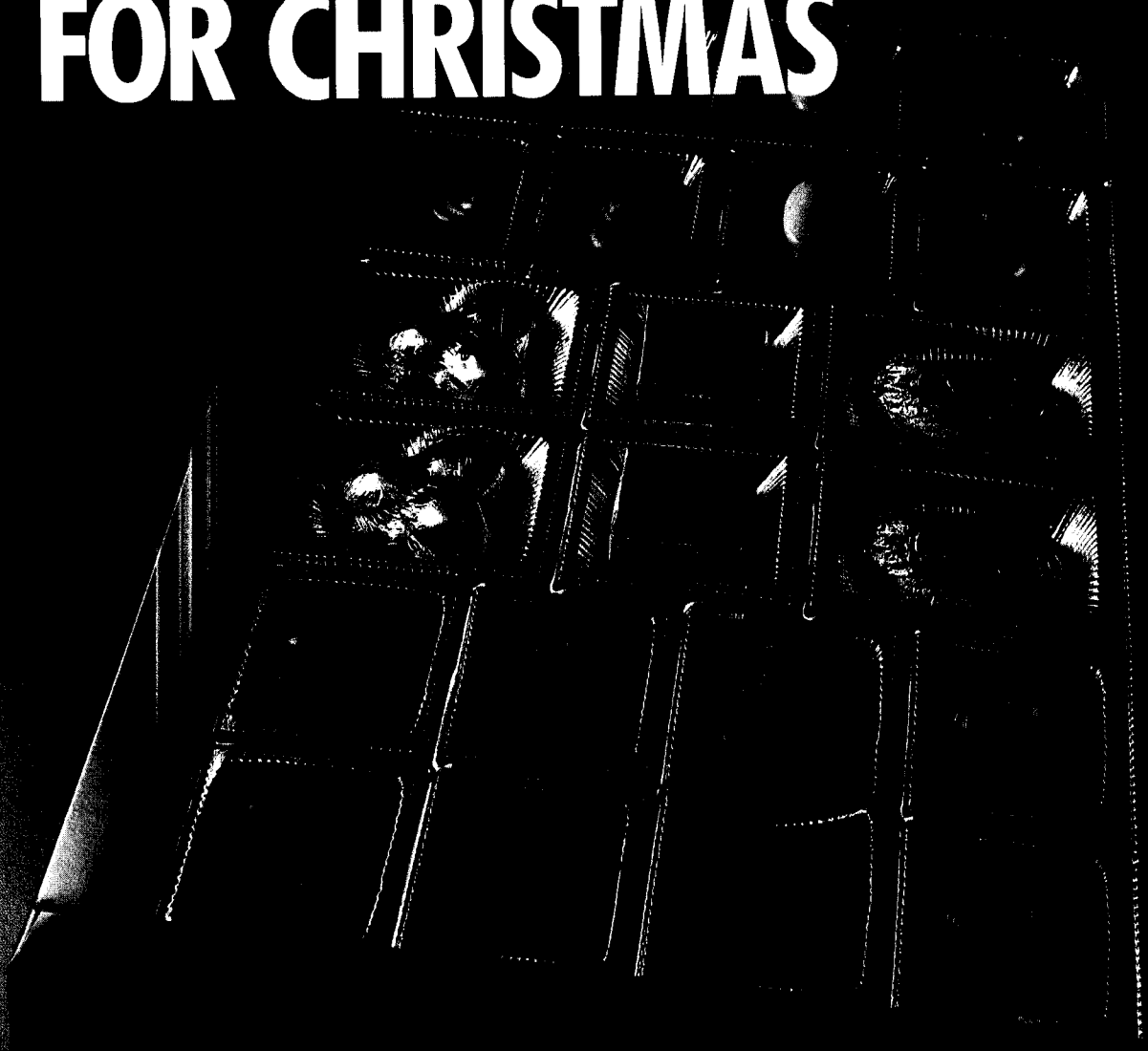

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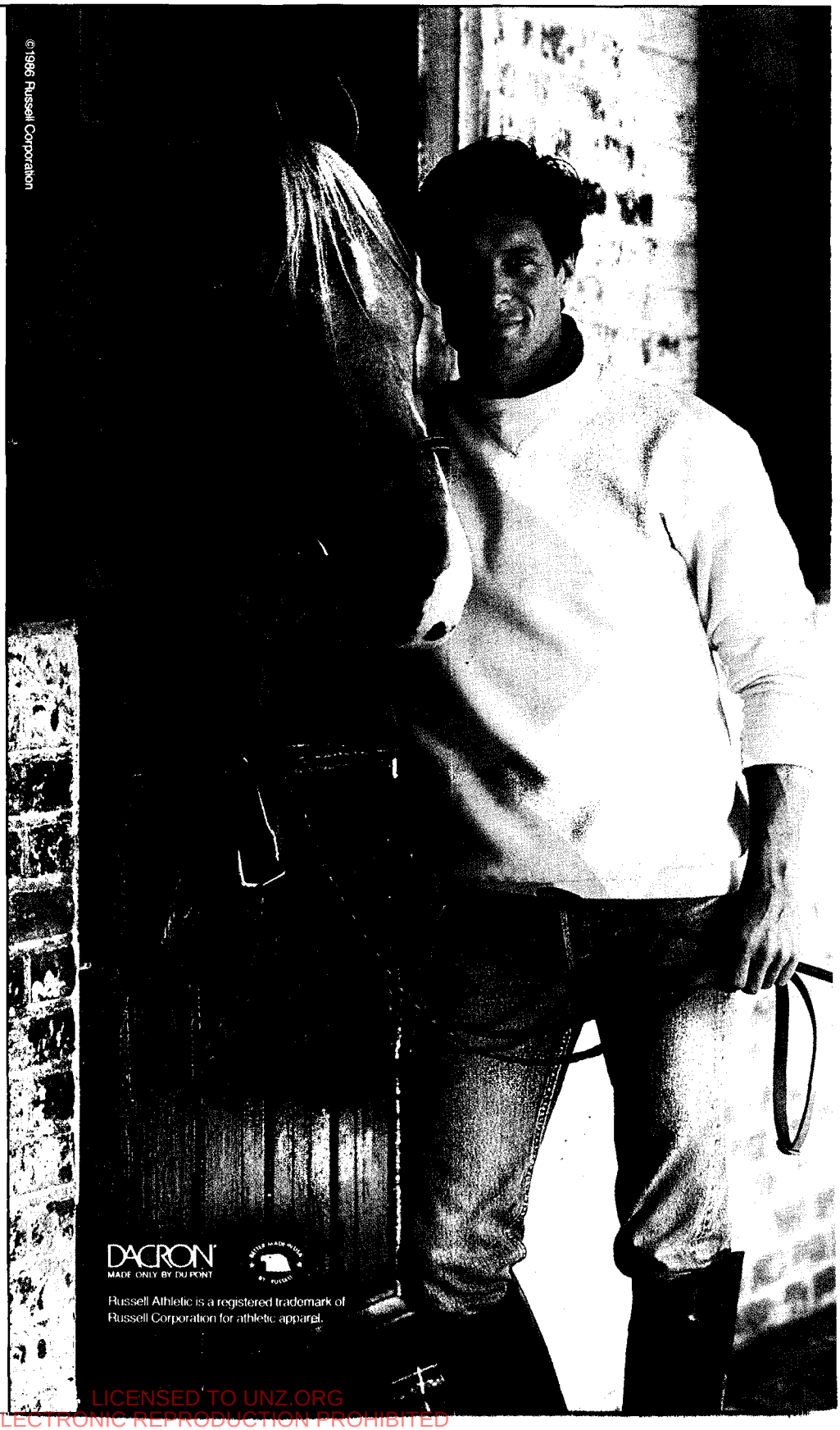
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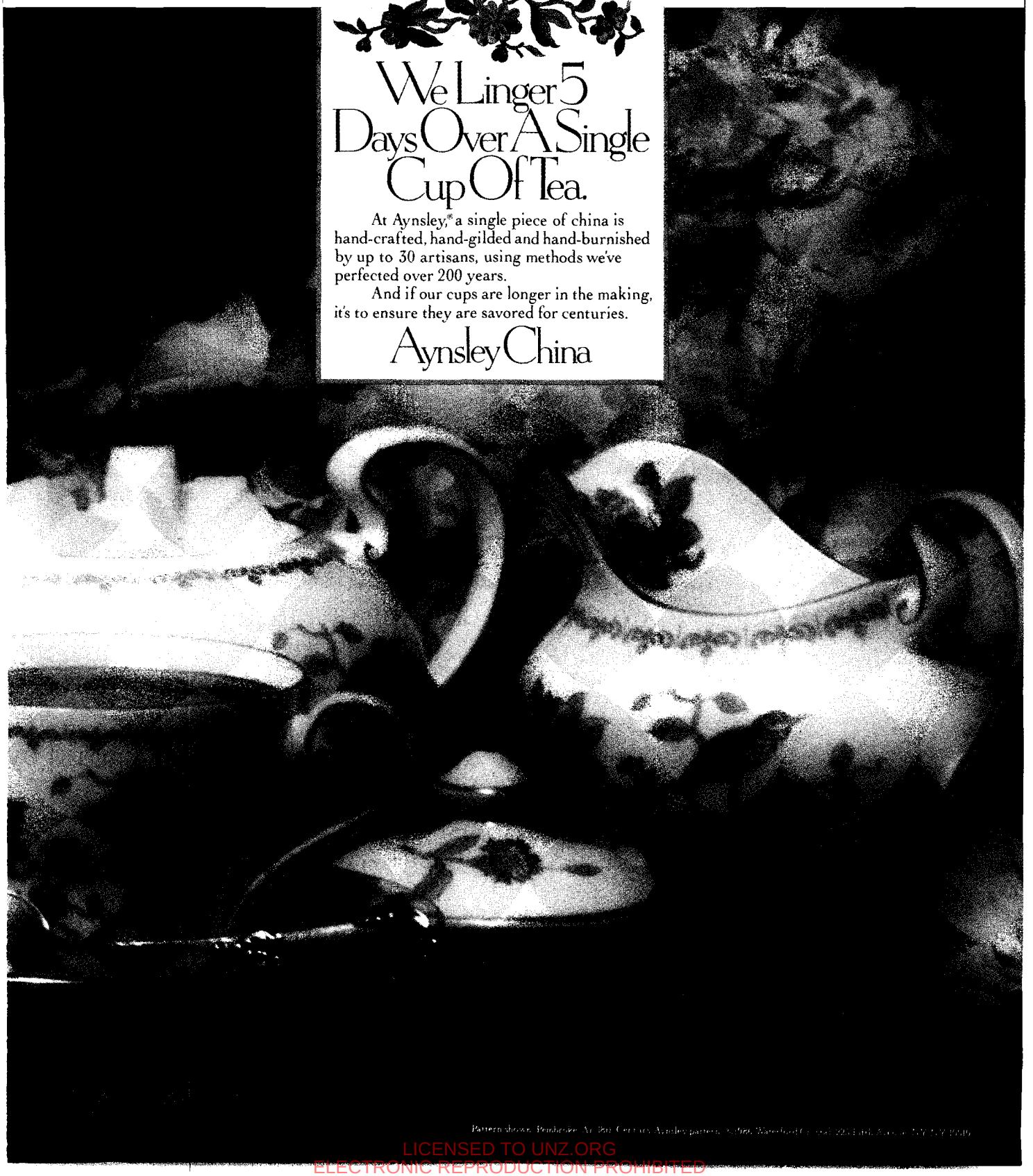

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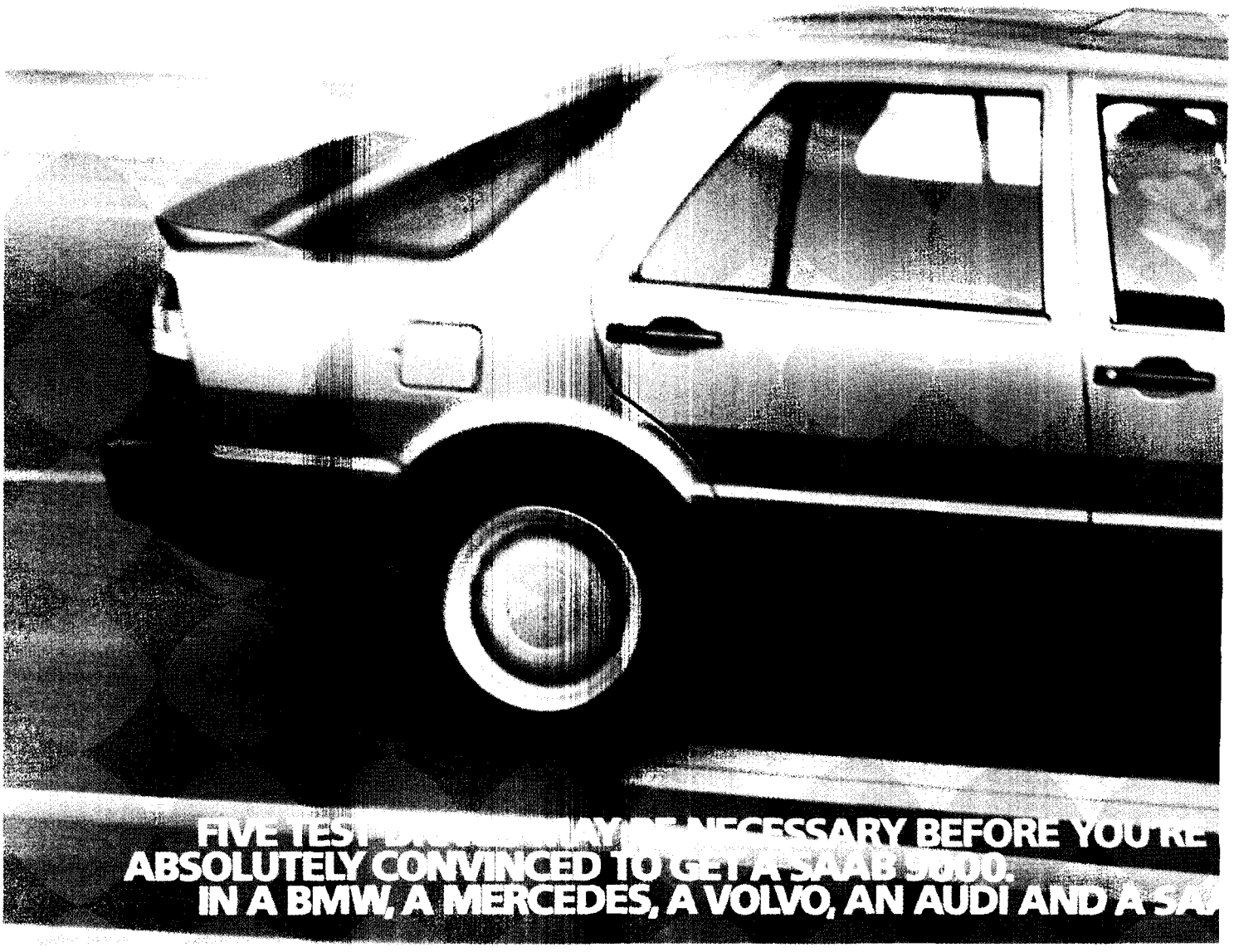
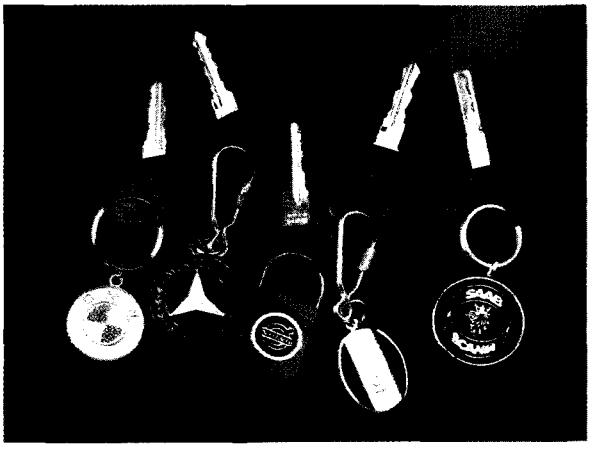


A reasonable driver, guided by the dictates of common sens might very well insist on test drives in all the cars in the Saab 90(class before actually buying a Saab. After all, it never hurts to comparison shop.



A reasonable driver, guided by desire to have a good time, might insist on the same thing. After all, the class of automobiles we're talkir about is one of the world's most coveted, the European high-performance sedan.

Mercedes-Benz, BMW, Audi and Volvo all produce models that are comparable to the Saab 90(A very short amount of time in those cars will prove to you that "comparable" is a long way from equal.

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In terms of performance, the Saab 9000 Turbo can accelerate
)m zero to 60 miles an hour in 7.6 seconds, according to *Road &*
'ack. Compared to that, a lot of the other cars in this class look
)sitively flat-footed.

In terms of comfort, only the Saab has enough room inside to
ve been designated a "large car" by the U.S. Environmental
'otection Agency. The others are cramped by comparison.

And in terms of utility, only the Saab has a fold down, split rear
at that allows you to expand the cargo area up to 56 cubic feet
hen you need to carry something large.

So you might feel that you need five test drives before you
oose the Saab 9000. That's perfectly reasonable.

Or you might just look at the Saab 9000 and say to yourself,
want this car." That's perfectly reasonable, too.

The most intelligent cars ever built. SAAB

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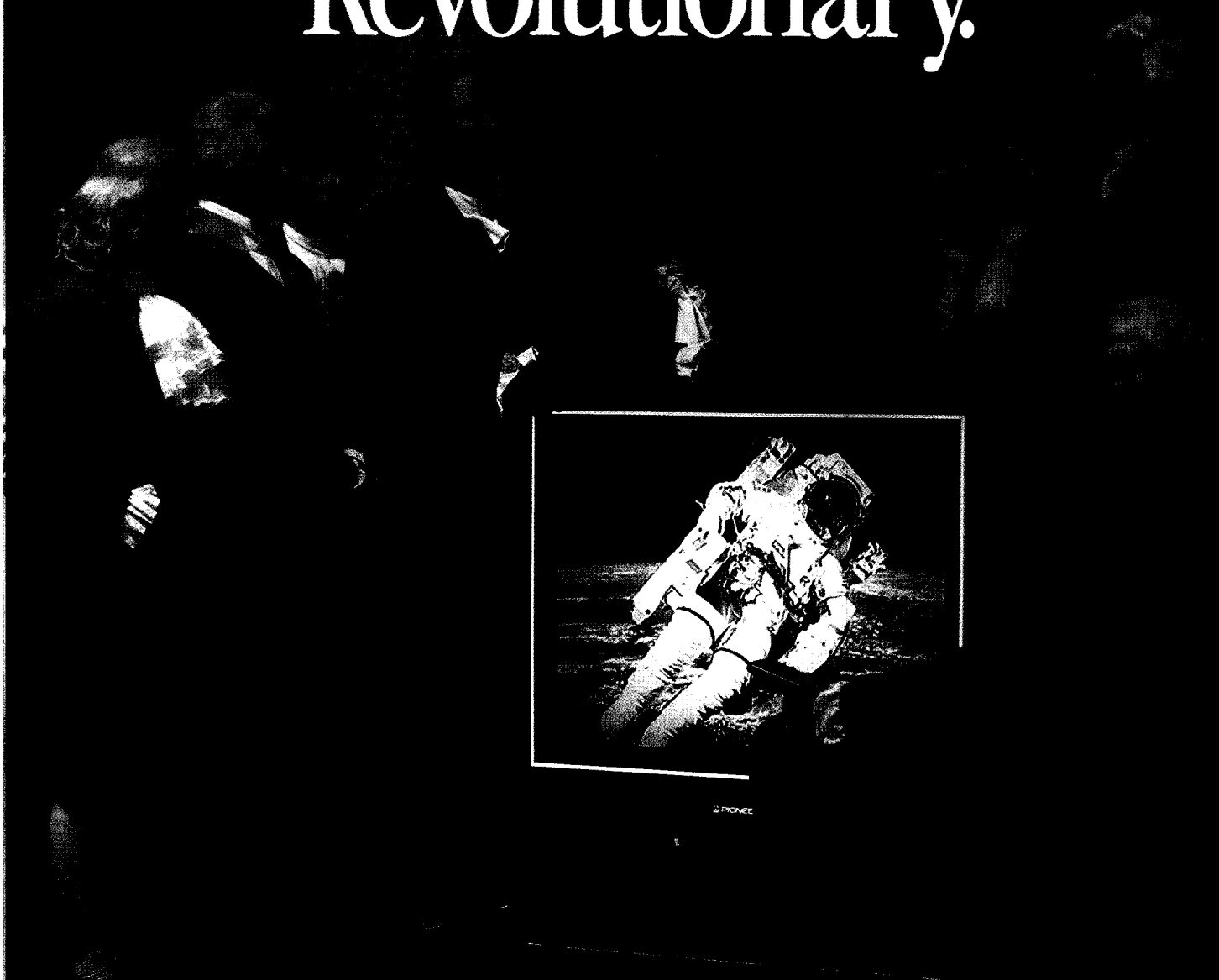
Not Evolutionary, Revolutionary.



Pioneer's Revolutionary 40" Projection Monitor

For the first time in history, projection television is no longer a compromise. Because Pioneer has discovered the secret to combining the bigness of projection TV with the brilliance and precision of direct-view monitors.

It's called the Pioneer 40" Projection Monitor. And thanks to a revolutionary lens system, perfect corner to corner focus, and the only double-sided lenticular screen, it produces a better quality image than any projection system you've ever laid eyes on.

But that's enough for comparisons. Because once you see this revolutionary creation in full glory, you'll immediately discover that this giant picture is, without a doubt, beyond compare. For more information, call 1-800-421-1404.

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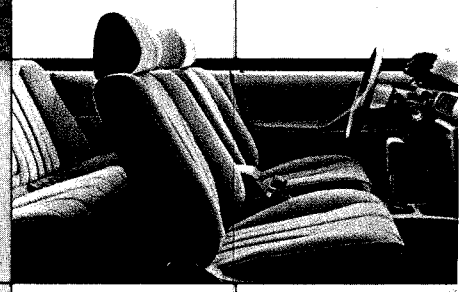
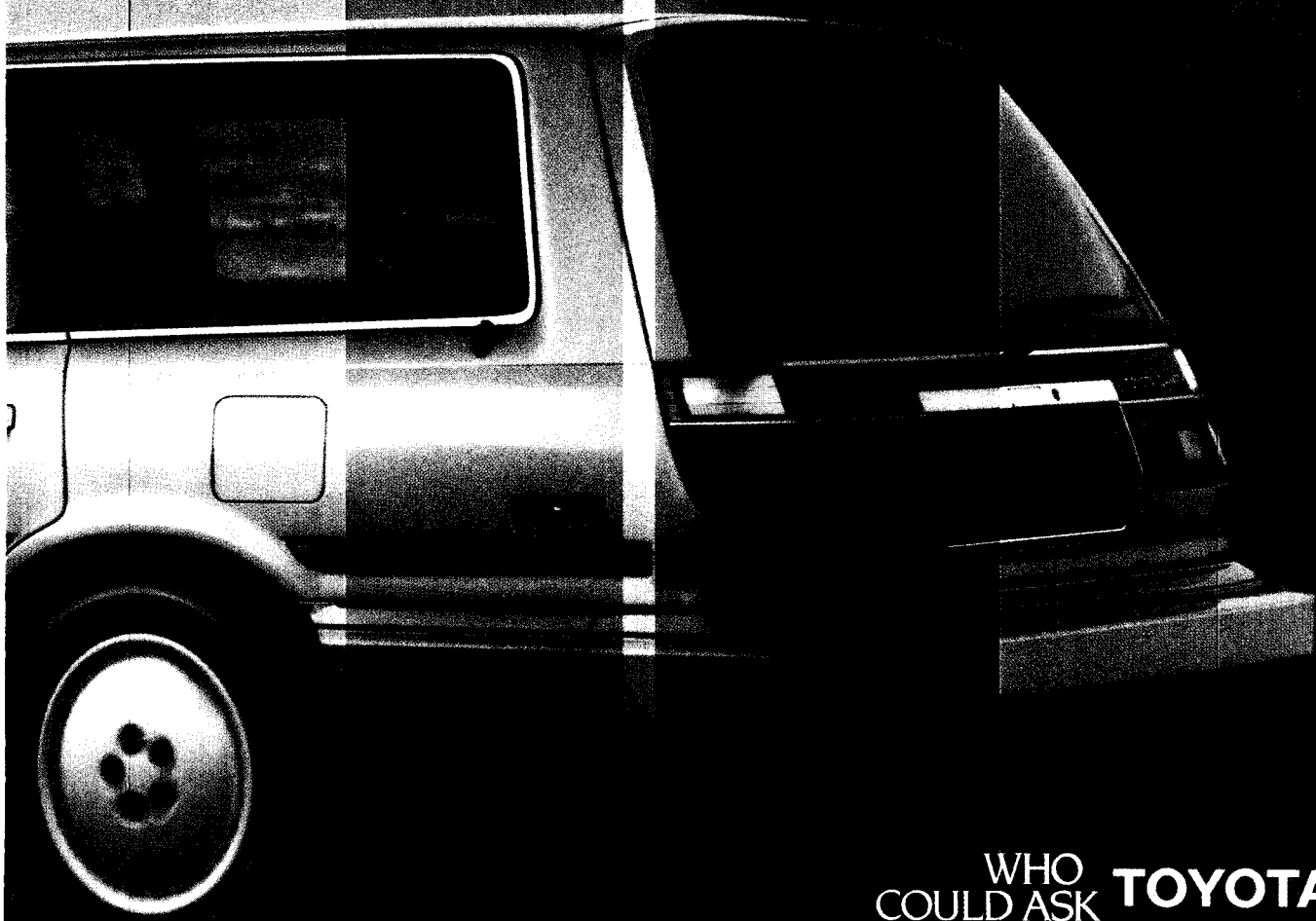
IT OPENS UP A NEW DIMENSION

Spacious, flat cargo area for easy loading... 65.1 cu. ft. with split rear seatbacks folded down. Rich, Camry comfort throughout, with deep velour upholstery. New dimensions in space, comfort, styling.





WHO COULD ASK FOR ANYTHING MORE! **TOYOTA**

Get More From Life... Buckle Up!

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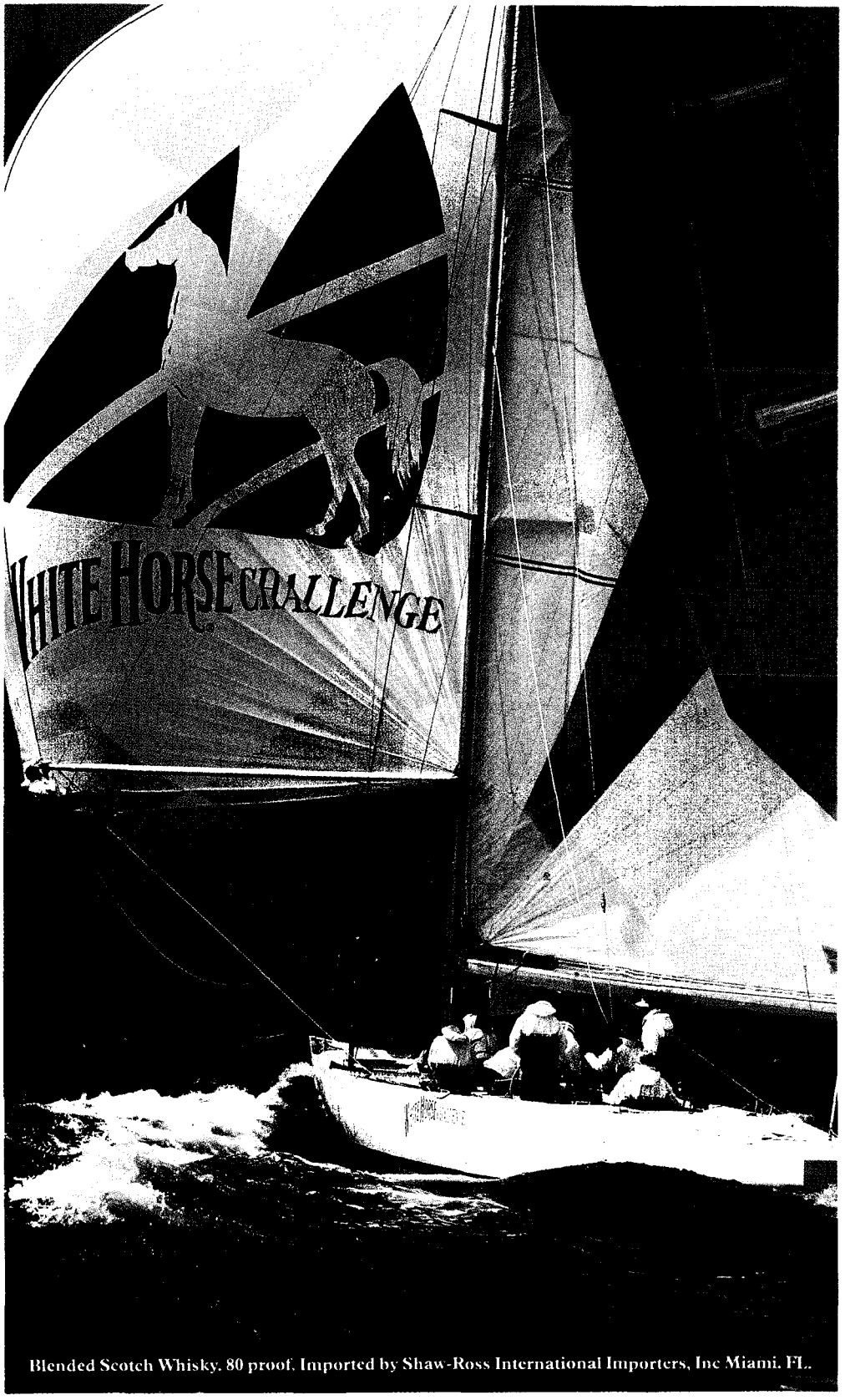
THE SPIRIT TO WIN



Blended Scotch Whisky. 80 proof. Imported by Shaw-Ross International Importers, Inc Miami, FL.

The America's Cup is the world's most spectacular and prestigious yacht race. It is gruellingly tough, taking years of preparation and nearly six months of actual racing.

More than anything it needs the spirit to win.

THE WHITE HORSE® CHALLENGE
THE TEAM SPIRIT

White Horse Blended Scotch Whisky is not only the official Scotch Whisky to the America's Cup. It is also the major sponsor of the British Challenge, appropriately named "White Crusader," which is battling it out off the coast of Western Australia.

Just competing means they're one of the best in the world. For them and all the other challengers the fight for the Cup will take a special blend of technology, skill, team-work and the spirit to win.

Much the same qualities are required to produce a fine Blended Scotch Whisky like White Horse. It owes its distinctiveness to the quality of its malt and the skills of its blender.

Skills that go back one and a half centuries. That's well before the first America's Cup race in 1851.

White Horse Blended Scotch Whisky
The official Scotch Whisky
to the America's Cup, Perth 1987.

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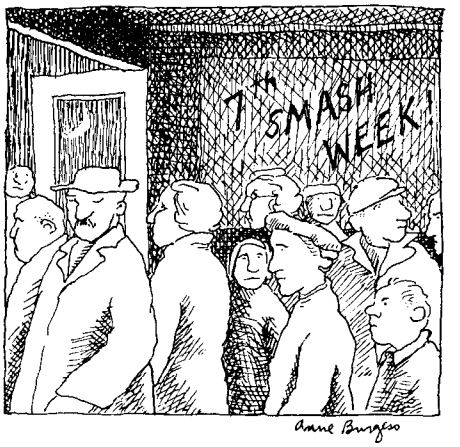
GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 19.

EAST SIDE

PUBLIC THEATRE, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
"Typhoon Club" (1985; directed by Shinji Somai; in Japanese). No performances Wednesday and Thursday, Dec. 24-25.

MOVIELAND 8TH STREET TRIPLEX, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 18: "An American Tail" (Don Bluth), an animated film. From Dec. 19: "The Mission" (Roland Joffé), with Robert De Niro and Jeremy Irons.
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 24: "Something Wild" (†). From Dec. 25: "Brighton Beach Memoirs" (Gene Saks), with Blythe Danner, Bob Dishy, Judith Ivey, and Jonathan Silverman.
Theatre 3: Through Dec. 18: "Jumpin' Jack Flash" (Penny Marshall), with Whoopi Goldberg. From Dec. 19: "No Mercy" (Richard Pearce), with Richard Gere and Kim Basinger.

NEW GRAMERCY, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
Through Dec. 18: "Mona Lisa" (†).
From Dec. 19: "Little Shop of Horrors" (Frank Oz), with Rick Moranis, Ellen Greene, and Vincent Gardenia.

BAY CINEMA, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
Through Dec. 24: "The Color of Money" (†).
From Dec. 25: "The Morning After" (Sidney Lumet), with Jane Fonda, Jeff Bridges, and Raul Julia.

LOEWS 34TH STREET SHOWPLACE, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home" (Leonard Nimoy), with William Shatner and Nimoy.
Theatre 2: "Three Amigos" (John Landis), with Steve Martin, Chevy Chase, and Martin Short.
Theatre 3: "The Golden Child" (Michael Ritchie), with Eddie Murphy.

34TH ST. EAST, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Crimes of the Heart" (†).

EASTSIDE CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
Through Dec. 18: "Song of the South" (†).
Dec. 19-23: "Ruthless People" (Jerry Zucker, Jim Abrahams, and David Zucker), with Danny DeVito, Judge Reinhold, Helen Slater, and Bette Midler. From Dec. 24: "The Color of Money" (†).

SUTTON, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"The Mosquito Coast" (Peter Weir), with Harrison Ford.

GOTHAM CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan.

PLAZA, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
Through Dec. 18: "Round Midnight" (†).
From Dec. 19: "The Mission" (Roland Joffé), with Robert De Niro and Jeremy Irons.

MANHATTAN I AND 2, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Crimes of the Heart" (†).
Theatre 2: "Heartbreak Ridge" (Clint Eastwood), with Eastwood.

BARONET AND CORONET, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 18: "Something Wild" (†). From Dec. 19: "King Kong Lives" (John Guillermin), with Brian Kerwin and Linda Hamilton.
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 23: "The Color of Money" (†). From Dec. 24: "Native Son" (Jerrold Freedman), with Oprah Winfrey, Elizabeth McGovern, and Victor Love.

D. W. GRIFFITH, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
Through Dec. 18: "Blue Velvet" (†).
From Dec. 19: "Round Midnight" (†).

CINEMA I AND II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 18: "The Mission" (Roland Joffé), with Robert De Niro and Jeremy Irons. From Dec. 19: "Miss Mary" (Maria Luisa Bemberg), with Julie Christie.
Theatre 2: "Betty Blue" (Jean-Jacques Beineix; in French), with Jean-Hugues Anglade and Béatrice Dalle.

GEMINI I AND 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 18: "Peggy Sue Got Married" (†). From Dec. 19: "No Mercy" (Richard Pearce), with Richard Gere and Kim Basinger.
Theatre 2: "Three Amigos" (John Landis), with Steve Martin, Chevy Chase, and Martin Short.

BEEKMAN, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
Through Dec. 18: "True Stories" (†).
From Dec. 19: "Little Shop of Horrors" (Frank Oz), with Rick Moranis, Ellen Greene, and Vincent Gardenia.

LOEWS NEW YORK TWIN, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "The Golden Child" (Michael Ritchie), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 18: "An American Tail" (Don Bluth), an animated film. From Dec. 19: "Platoon" (Oliver Stone), with Tom Berenger, Willem Dafoe, and Charlie Sheen.

68TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Rouge Baiser" (Vera Belmont; in French), with Charlotte Valandrey.

LOEWS TOWER EAST, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Children of a Lesser God" (Randa Haines), with William Hurt and Marlee Matlin.

U.A. EAST, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Three Amigos" (John Landis), with Steve Martin, Chevy Chase, and Martin Short.

R.K.O. 86TH ST. TWIN, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: "Heartbreak Ridge" (Clint Eastwood), with Eastwood.
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 18: "Firewalker" (J. Lee Thompson), with Chuck Norris and Lou Gossett. From Dec. 19: "No Mercy" (Richard Pearce), with Richard Gere and Kim Basinger.

LOEWS ORPHEUM I AND 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home" (Leonard Nimoy), with William Shatner and Nimoy.
Theatre 2: "The Golden Child" (Michael Ritchie), with Eddie Murphy.

86TH ST. EAST, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Through Dec. 24: "Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan.
From Dec. 25: "The Morning After" (Sidney Lumet), with Jane Fonda, Jeff Bridges, and Raul Julia.

WEST SIDE

FILM FORUM I AND 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: "The Future of Emily" (1984; directed by Helma Sanders-Brahms; in French), with Brigitte Fossey and Hildegard Knef.
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 18: "Porky Pig in Hollywood," a program of sixteen black-and-white Warner Brothers cartoons, directed by Tex Avery, Friz Freleng, Bob Clampett, Frank Tashlin, and Chuck Jones. From Dec. 19: "Mona Lisa" (†).

BLEECKER ST. CINEMA I AND 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: "Children of a Lesser God" (Randa Haines), with William Hurt and Marlee Matlin.
Theatre 2: "My Beautiful Laundrette" (†); and "Mother Teresa" (Ann and Jeanette Petrie), a documentary.

WAVERLY I AND 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Blue Velvet" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 24: "The Color of Money" (†). From Dec. 25: "The Morning After" (Sidney Lumet), with Jane Fonda, Jeff Bridges, and Raul Julia.

8TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
"True Stories" (†).

R.K.O. ART GREENWICH TWIN, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Crimes of the Heart" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 18: "Round Midnight" (†). From Dec. 19: "The Mosquito Coast" (Peter Weir), with Harrison Ford.

QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Down by Law" (†).
Theatre 2: "She's Gotta Have It" (†).
Theatre 3: "A Room with a View" (†).
Theatre 4: "Peggy Sue Got Married" (†).

23RD ST. WEST TRIPLEX, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Heartbreak Ridge" (Clint Eastwood), with Eastwood.
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 18: (Matinées only) "Song of the South" (†); and (evenings only) "Soul Man" (Steve Miner), with C. Thomas Howell and Rae Dawn Chong. From Dec. 19: "Lady and the Tramp" (1955), a Walt Disney full-length cartoon.
Theatre 3: Through Dec. 18: "The Name of the Rose" (Jean-Jacques Annaud), with Sean Connery and F. Murray Abraham. From Dec. 19: "King Kong Lives" (John Guillermin), with Brian Kerwin and Linda Hamilton.

GUILD, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
Through Dec. 18: "Song of the South" (†).
From Dec. 19: "Lady and the Tramp" (1955), a Walt Disney full-length cartoon.

ZIEGFELD, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Nutcracker, The Motion Picture" (Carroll Ballard), with the Pacific Northwest Ballet.

57TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Sid and Nancy" (Alex Cox), with Gary Oldman and Chloe Webb.

NEW CARNEGIE, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
Through Dec. 18: "Place of Weeping" (Darrell Roodt).
Dec. 19-24: "Mona Lisa"(†).
From Dec. 25: "Children of a Lesser God" (Randa Haines), with William Hurt and Marlee Matlin.

PARIS, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"The Decline of the American Empire" (†).

CINEMA 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Marlene" (Maximilian Schell), a documentary.

LOEWS PARAMOUNT, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Children of a Lesser God" (Randa Haines), with William Hurt and Marlee Matlin.

LINCOLN PLAZA 1, 2, AND 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 18: "The Sacrifice" (Andrei Tarkovsky; in Swedish), with Erland Josephson. From Dec. 19: "The Mosquito Coast" (Peter Weir), with Harrison Ford.
Theatre 2: "Thérèse" (Alain Cavalier; in French), with Catherine Mouchet.
Theatre 3: "Men . . ." (†).

CINEMA STUDIO I AND 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 22: "Tangos: The Exile of Gardel" (Fernando E. Solanas; in French and Spanish). From Dec. 23: "El Amor Brujo" (Carlos Saura; in Spanish).
Theatre 2: "Ménage" (†).

EMBASSY 72ND ST. I AND 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 24: "The Color of Money" (†). From Dec. 25: "The Morning

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

After" (Sidney Lumet), with Jane Fonda, Jeff Bridges, and Raul Julia.
Theatre 2: "A Room with a View" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 18: "Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan. From Dec. 19: "Little Shop of Horrors" (Frank Oz), with Rick Moranis, Ellen Greene, and Vicent Gardenia.
Theatre 2: "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home" (Leonard Nimoy), with William Shatner and Nimoy.
Theatre 3: "The Golden Child" (Michael Ritchie), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 4: "Crimes of the Heart" (†).
Theatre 5: "Three Amigos" (John Landis), with Steve Martin, Chevy Chase, and Martin Short.
Theatre 6: Through Dec. 18: "The Golden Child." From Dec. 19: "No Mercy" (Richard Pearce), with Richard Gere and Kim Basinger.

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 18: "True Stories" (†). From Dec. 19: "Round Midnight" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 18: "Blue Velvet" (†). From Dec. 19: "The Mission" (Roland Joffé), with Robert De Niro and Jeremy Irons.

Olympia Quad, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 18: (Matinées only) "An American Tail" (Don Bluth), an animated film; and (evenings only) "Something Wild" (†). From Dec. 19: (Matinées only) "An American Tail;" and (evenings only) "Peggy Sue Got Married" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 18: "Peggy Sue Got Married" (†). From Dec. 19: "King Kong Lives" (John Guillermin), with Brian Kerwin and Linda Hamilton.
Theatre 3: Through Dec. 18: (Matinées only) "Song of the South" (†); and (evenings only) "Stand By Me" (†). From Dec. 19: "Lady and the Tramp" (1955), a Walt Disney full-length cartoon.
Theatre 4: Through Dec. 18: "Class of Nuke 'em High" (Richard W. Haines and Samuel Weil). From Dec. 19: "Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Peggy Sue Got Married" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 18: "The Patriot" (directed by Frank Harris), with Gregg Henry. From Dec. 19: "King Kong Lives" (John Guillermin), with Brian Kerwin and Linda Hamilton.
Theatre 3: Through Dec. 18: "Something Wild" (†). From Dec. 19: "An American Tail" (Don Bluth), an animated film.
Theatre 4: "She's Gotta Have It" (†).
Theatre 5: Through Dec. 18: "Streets of Gold" (Joe Roth), with Klaus Maria Brandauer. From Dec. 19: "Little Shop of Horrors" (Frank Oz), with Rick Moranis, Ellen Greene, and Vincent Gardenia.
Theatre 6: "Blue Velvet" (†).

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
"The Color of Money" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, Seventh Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan.
Theatre 3: Through Dec. 23: "Soul Man" (Steve Miner), with C. Thomas Howell and Rae Dawn Chong. From Dec. 24: "Native Son" (Jerrold Freedman), with Oprah Winfrey, Elizabeth McGovern, and Victor Love.
Theatre 4: Through Dec. 23: "Stand By Me" (†). From Dec. 24: "Native Son."

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
Through Dec. 18: "An American Tail" (Don Bluth), an animated film.
From Dec. 19: "Platoon" (Oliver Stone), with Tom Berenger, Willem Dafoe, and Charlie Sheen.

Loews State 1 and 2, B'way at 45th. (575-5060)
Theatre 1: "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home" (Leonard Nimoy), with William Shatner and Nimoy.
Theatre 2: "The Golden Child" (Michael Ritchie), with Eddie Murphy.

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New Embassy 49th Street, 49th St. near Seventh Ave. (757-7003)
Through Dec. 18: "Song of the South" (†).
From Dec. 19: "Lady and the Tramp" (1955), a Walt Disney full-length cartoon. (No performances Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 22-23.)

R.K.O. National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 18: "Jumpin' Jack Flash" (Penny Marshall), with Whoopi Goldberg. From Dec. 19: "The Mosquito Coast" (Peter Weir), with Harrison Ford.
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 18: "The Wraith" (Mike Marvin). From Dec. 19: "The Mission" (Roland Joffé), with Robert De Niro and Jeremy Irons.

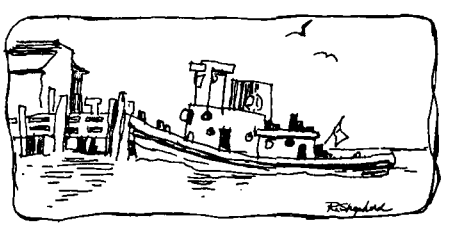
R.K.O. Warner Twin, B'way at 47th. (315-8425)
Theatre 1: "Heartbreak Ridge" (Clint Eastwood), with Eastwood.
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 18: "Firewalker" (J. Lee Thompson), with Chuck Norris and Lou Gossett. From Dec. 19: "No Mercy" (Richard Pearce), with Richard Gere and Kim Basinger.

U.A. Twin 1 and 2, B'way at 49th. (247-1635)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 18: "Class of Nuke 'em High" (Richard W. Haines and Samuel Weil). From Dec. 19: To be announced.
Theatre 2: "Three Amigos" (John Landis), with Steve Martin, Chevy Chase, and Martin Short.

REVIVAL HOUSES

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through Dec. 18: "Choose Me" (1984; directed by Alan Rudolph), with Keith Carradine, Geneviève Bujold, and Lesley Ann Warren; and "Trouble in Mind" (1986; Alan Rudolph), with Kris Kristofferson, Geneviève Bujold, Lori Singer, Keith Carradine, and Divine.
Dec. 19-20: "Kiss of the Spider Woman" (1985; Hector Babenco), with William Hurt and Raul Julia; and "Zoot Suit" (1982; Luis Valdez), with Edward James Olmos and Charles Aidman.
Dec. 21-23: "Plenty" (1985; Fred Schepisi), with Meryl Streep; and "Betrayal" (1983; David Jones), with Jeremy Irons, Ben Kingsley, and Patricia Hodge.
Dec. 24-25: "The Quiet Earth" (1986; Geoff Murphy), with Bruno Lawrence; and "The Day the Earth Stood Still" (†).
Dec. 26-27: A two-part program of Warner Brothers cartoons.

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
Dec. 17: "Life Begins at 8:30" (1942; Irving Pichel), with Ida Lupino, Monty Woolley, and Cornel Wilde; and "The Man Who Came to Dinner" (1942; William Keighley), with Bette Davis, Ann Sheridan, and Monty Woolley.
Dec. 18-20: "An Affair to Remember" (1957; Leo McCarey), with Cary Grant, Deborah Kerr, and Richard Denning; and "The Shop Around the Corner" (1940; Ernst Lubitsch), with Margaret Sullavan and James Stewart.
Dec. 21-22: "A Christmas Carol" (1938; Edwin L. Marin), with Terry Kilburn, Reginald Owen, Gene Lockhart, and Leo G. Carroll; and "Little Women" (1933; George Cukor), with Katharine Hepburn, Joan Bennett, Edna May Oliver, Frances Dee, and Spring Byington.
Dec. 23-25: "Miracle on 34th Street" (1947; George Seaton), with John Payne, Maureen O'Hara, Edmund Gwenn, and Natalie Wood; and "White Christmas" (1954; Michael Curtiz), with Bing Crosby, Danny Kaye, Rosemary Clooney, Vera-Ellen, and Dean Jagger.
Dec. 26-27: "Roman Holiday" (1953; William Wyler), with Audrey Hepburn, Gregory Peck, and Eddie Albert; and "Ninotchka" (1939; Ernst Lubitsch), with Greta Garbo, Melvyn Douglas, and Sig Rumann.



Thalia, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)
Dec. 17: "Macario" (1960; Roberto Gavaldon; a Mexican film, in Spanish); "Simon of the Desert" (1965; Luis Buñuel; a Mexican short film, in Spanish); and "Los Olvidados" ("The Young and the Damned;" 1950; Luis Buñuel; a Mexican film, in Spanish).
Dec. 18: "It's a Wonderful Life" (1946; Frank Capra), with James Stewart, Donna Reed, Henry Travers, Lionel Barrymore, Gloria Grahame, and Thomas Mitchell; and "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" (1939; Frank Capra), with Jean Arthur, James Stewart, Claude Rains, Guy Kibbee, and Beulah Bondi.
Dec. 19-20: "Day for Night" (1973; François Truffaut; in French), with Jacqueline Bisset, Jean-Pierre Aumont, Jean-Pierre Léaud, and Valentina Cortese; and "Shoot the Piano Player" (1960; François Truffaut; in French), with Charles Aznavour.
Dec. 21: "Breathless" (1959; Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Jean Seberg and Jean-Paul Belmondo; and "Made in U.S.A." (1967; Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Anna Karina.
Dec. 22: "Native Son" (1951; Pierre Chenal), with Richard Wright and Jean Wallace; and "The Joe Louis Story" (1953; Robert Gordon), with Coley Wallace, Paul Stewart, and Hilda Simms.
Dec. 23: "Open City" (†); and "Fear" (1956; Roberto Rossellini), with Ingrid Bergman.
Dec. 24: "Metropolis" (1926; Fritz Lang; a German silent film), with Brigitte Helm; and "Fantastic Planet" (1973; René Laloux; in French), an animated science-fiction film.
Dec. 25: "Frantic" ("Elevator to the Gallows;" 1957; Louis Malle; in French), with Jeanne Moreau; "The Sleeping Car Murder" (1966; Costa-Gavras; in French), with Simone Signoret and Yves Montand; and "Panique" (1946; Julien Duvivier; in French), with Michel Simon, Viviane Romance, and Paul Bernard.
Dec. 26-27: "Eraserhead" (1977; David Lynch); and "The Elephant Man" (†).

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)
Dec. 17: "Mondo Trasho" (1970; John Waters) and "Multiple Maniacs" (1977; John Waters).
Dec. 18: "Desperate Living" (1977; John Waters), with Edith Massey, Mink Stole, and Mary Vivian Pearce; and "Polyester" (1981; John Waters), with Divine and Tab Hunter.
Dec. 19: "Divine Waters" (1983; Vito Zagarrio), a documentary; and "Pink Flamingos" (1974; John Waters), with Divine.
Dec. 20: "Divine Waters;" and "Female Trouble" (1975; John Waters), with Divine.
Dec. 21: "Don Quixote de la Mancha" (1949; Rafael Gil; in Spanish); "Land Without Bread" (1932; Luis Buñuel; in Spanish); and "Un Chien Andalou" (†).
Dec. 22: "Yiddle with His Fiddle" (1937; Joseph Green; in Yiddish), with Molly Picon; and "The Dybbuk" (1968; Ivan Lengiel; in Yiddish).
Dec. 23: "Union Station" (1950; Rudolph Maté), with William Holden, Lyle Bettger, Nancy Olson, and Barry Fitzgerald; and "D.O.A." (1949; Rudolph Maté), with Edmond O'Brien.
Dec. 24-25: "It's a Wonderful Life" (1946; Frank Capra), with James Stewart, Donna Reed, Henry Travers, Lionel Barrymore, Gloria Grahame, and Thomas Mitchell; and "Meet John Doe" (†).
Dec. 26-27: "Dr. Strangelove" (†) and "The Mouse That Roared" (†).

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
Dec. 17: "Weekend in Havana" (1941; Walter Lang), with Alice Faye, John

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Payne, and Carmen Miranda; and "Greenwich Village" (1944; Walter Lang), with Carmen Miranda, Don Ameche, and William Bendix.

Dec. 18: "Red River" (1948; Howard Hawks), with Montgomery Clift, John Wayne, Walter Brennan, and Joanne Dru; and "Shane" (1953; George Stevens), with Alan Ladd, Jean Arthur, Brandon deWilde, Van Heflin, and Jack Palance.

Dec. 19-20: "The Great Gatsby" (1949; Elliott Nugent), with Alan Ladd, Betty Field, Macdonald Carey, and Barry Sullivan; and "The Blue Dahlia" (1946; George Marshall), with Alan Ladd, Veronica Lake, Howard Da Silva, and William Bendix.

Dec. 21-22: "La Guerre Est Finie" (1966; Alain Resnais; in French), with Yves Montand, Ingrid Thulin, Geneviève Bujold, Michel Piccoli, and Jean Dasté; and "Hiroshima, Mon Amour" (1959; Alain Resnais; in French), with Emmanuèle Riva and Eiji Okada.

Dec. 23: "Forbidden Planet" (†) and "The Time Machine" (†).

Dec. 24: Theatre closed.

Dec. 25: "Midnight" (1939; Mitchell Leisen), with Claudette Colbert, Don Ameche, and John Barrymore; and "Trouble in Paradise" (1932; Ernst Lubitsch), with Kay Francis, Herbert Marshall, Miriam Hopkins, and Edward Everett Horton.

Dec. 26-27: "The 39 Steps" (†); and "The Lady Vanishes" (1938; Alfred Hitchcock), with Dame May Whitty, Margaret Lockwood, Michael Redgrave, Paul Lukas, and Cecil Parker.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

THEATRE I: Dec. 18 at 2:30 and 6: "Night Mail" (1936; directed by Harry Watt and Basil Wright), "The River" (1937; Pare Lorentz), and "The Spanish Earth" (1937; Joris Ivens). . . . ¶ Dec. 19 at 2:30: "Dangerous Moonlight" ("Suicide Squadron;" 1941; Brian Desmond Hurst), with Anton Walbrook, Sally Gray, and Derrick de Marney. . . . ¶ Dec. 19 at 6: "On the Night of the Fire" ("The Fugitive;" 1939; Brian Desmond Hurst), with Ralph Richardson and Diana Wynyard. . . . ¶ Dec. 20 at 2: "Noose" ("The Silk Noose;" 1948; Edmond T. Greville), with Carole Landis, Derek Farr, Joseph Calleia, and Stanley Holloway. . . . ¶ Dec. 20 at 5: "The Small Back Room" (1949; Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger), with David Farrar, Kathleen Byron, Jack Hawkins, and Leslie Banks. . . . ¶ Dec. 21 at 2: "The Intimate Stranger" ("Finger of Guilt;" 1956; Joseph Losey), with Richard Basehart, Mary Murphy, Constance Cummings, and Roger Livesey. . . . ¶ Dec. 21 at 5: "The Sleeping Tiger" (1954; Joseph Losey), with Dirk Bogarde, Alexis Smith, Alexander Knox, and Hugh Griffith. . . . ¶ Dec. 22 at 2:30: "A Place of One's Own" (1945; Bernard Knowles), with James Mason, Margaret Lockwood, and Dennis Price. . . . ¶ Dec. 22 at 6: "Trunk Crime" ("Design for Murder;" 1939; Roy Boulting). . . . ¶ Dec. 23 at 2:30: "I See a Dark Stranger" ("The Adventuress;" 1946; Frank Launder), with Deborah Kerr, Trevor Howard, and Raymond Huntley. . . . ¶ Dec. 23 at 6: "Green for Danger" (1946; Sidney Gilliat), with Trevor Howard, Alastair Sim, Sally Gray, and Rosamund John. . . . ¶ Dec. 26 at 2:30: "Brief Encounter" (1945; David Lean), with Celia Johnson, Trevor Howard, and Stanley Holloway. . . . ¶ Dec. 26 at 6: "I Know Where I'm Going" (1945; Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger), with Roger Livesey and Wendy Hiller. . . . ¶ Dec. 27 at 2: "The Hasty Heart" (1949; Vincent Sherman), with Ronald Reagan, Patricia Neal, and Richard Todd. . . . ¶ Dec. 27 at 5: "The Clouded Yellow" (1950; Ralph Thomas), with Jean Simmons and Trevor Howard.

THEATRE 2: Dec. 18 at 3 and 6:30: "The Rise and Fall of the Borscht Belt" (1986; Peter Davis), a documentary. . . . ¶ Dec. 19 at 3: "La Vie de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ" (1913; Maurice-André Maître; a French silent film, with French intertitles), with Jacques Normand and Gina Moreau. . . . ¶ Dec. 19 at 6:30 and Dec. 20 at 2:30: "Les Misérables" (1913; Albert Capellani; a French silent film with French intertitles), with Henri Krauss and Mistinguett. . . . ¶ Dec. 20 at 5:30: "Le Reflet de Claude Mercoeur" (1923; Julien Duvivier; a French silent film, with French intertitles), with Gaston Jacquet and Maud Richard. . . . ¶ Dec. 21 at 2:30: "L'Auberge Rouge" (1923; Jean Epstein; a French silent film, with French intertitles), with Léon Mathot and Gina Manès. . . . ¶ Dec. 21 at 5:30: "Vendémiaire" (1919; Louis Feuillade; a French silent film, with French intertitles), with René Cresté and Mary Harald. . . . ¶ Dec. 22 at 3: "Le Reflet de Claude Mercoeur." . . . ¶ Dec. 22 at 6:30: "L'Auberge Rouge." . . . ¶ Dec. 23 at 3: "Vendémiaire." . . . ¶ Dec. 23 at 6:30 and Dec. 26 at 3: "Ce Cochon de Morin" (1924; Viatcheslav Tourjansky; a French silent film, with French intertitles), with Nicolas Rimsky and Denise Legeay. . . . ¶ Dec. 26 at 6:30 and Dec. 27 at 2:30: "Ame d'Artiste" (1924; Germaine Dulac; a French silent film, with French intertitles), with Mabel Poulton, Gina Manès, Nicolas Koline, and Ivan Petrovitch. . . . ¶ Dec. 27 at 5:30: "Casanova" (1927; Alexandre Volkoff; a French silent film, with English intertitles), with Ivan Mosjoukine, Rudolf Klein-Rogge, and Diana Karenne.

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—Through Dec. 21: "Silver Lake with Dolmen Music," an installation by Meredith Monk, including "Dolmen Music" (1980). Continuous showings Wednesday through Saturday, 11 to 5, and Sunday, noon to 6. Closed Mondays.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

Blue Velvet—Written and directed by David Lynch, this is possibly the only coming-of-age movie in which sex has the danger and the heightened excitement of a horror picture. The film is consciously purplish and consciously funny, and the two work together in an original, down-home way. The setting is an archetypal small, sleepy city in an indefinite mythic present that feels like the past, and Kyle MacLachlan is Jeffrey, the clean-cut young man who's scared of his dirty thoughts (but wants to have them anyway). He commutes between the blue lady of the night (Isabella Rossellini, who's a dream of a freak) and the sunshine girl he loves (Laura Dern). The movie has so much aural-visual humor and poetry that it's sustained despite the wobbly plot and other weaknesses. With Dennis Hopper, who gives the movie a jolt of horrific energy, and Dean Stockwell, who is a smiling wonder as Ben the sandman. Also with Hope Lange, Priscilla Pointer, Brad Dourif, and Jack Nance. (Reviewed in our issue of 9/22/86.) (Waverly, and Criterion Center . . . ¶ D. W. Griffith, and Metro Cinema; through Dec. 18.)

Un Chien Andalou (1928)—Even without the famous shock image of the sliced eye, Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dali's short silent film has the hallucinatory and incendiary effect they sought. Some of the images have great poetic force, and at times they have an erotic humor that one has difficulty explaining, even to oneself. With Pierre Batcheff as the cyclist, Dali as the priest, and Buñuel as the man with the razor. (Thalia SoHo; Dec. 21.)

The Color of Money—This Martin Scorsese film takes up Paul Newman as Fast Eddie Felson twenty-five years after the close of the 1961 Robert Rossen film "The Hustler," in which Eddie, the new poolroom champion, quit the game. Now he's a silver-haired Chicago liquor salesman, a likable cynical sharpie who himself stakes young hustlers (for sixty per cent of their winnings). When he sees the raw, cocky upstart Vincent (Tom Cruise), he makes a deal to train the kid. Newman brings off some beautiful smiling deviltry. The kick he gets out of acting is inseparable from Eddie's con artistry, and, with the help of pungent low-life dialogue by Richard Price, who wrote the script, he carries the action along. But about midway the joy goes out of Newman's performance, which (despite the efforts of a lot of good actors) is the only life in the movie. With Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, Helen Shaver, Forest Whitaker, John Turturro, and Bill Cobbs. (11/3/86) (Embassy I. . . . ¶ Coronet; through Dec. 23. . . . ¶ Bay Cinema, Waverly, and Embassy 72nd St.; through Dec. 24. . . . ¶ Eastside Cinema; starting Dec. 24.)

Crimes of the Heart—Diane Keaton, Jessica Lange, and Sissy Spacek playing sisters and sparking off each other are something to see. The play, by Beth Henley—a comedy about wacked-out normality, set in Hazlehurst, Mississippi—has its goofy charm; it's thin material, though, and her screen adaptation is just the usual "opening out." But the three actresses put so much faith in their roles that they carry the movie, triumphantly. They take the play's borderline pathos about heartbreakingly screwed-up lives—it's a mixture of looniness and lyricism—and give it real vitality. These are inspired performances. With Sam Shepard, Tess Harper, David Carpenter, and Hurd Hatfield. Directed (with much flair) by Bruce Beresford. (12/15/86) (34th St. East, Manhattan, R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

The Day the Earth Stood Still (1951)—Robert Wise directed this hasty sci-fi about a peace-giving flying saucer, manned by Michael Rennie, that alights on the Washington Ellipse. Quite wry and alarmingly smooth. (Cinema Village; Dec. 24-25.)

The Decline of the American Empire—The French-Canadian writer-director Denys Arcand takes on the subject of sex in a period of social change, without the binding ties of family and religion or strong commitment to the future—sex in a period when the eight principal characters (aging middle-class intellectuals connected with the History Department of a Montreal university) no longer believe in postponing pleasure. On this Friday afternoon in autumn, the women, who need to keep in shape in order to appeal to men, work out together at a gym in the city while the men, gathered at a lakeside cottage, prepare trout coulibiac for a festive dinner. Both groups talk about sex, and when they're together in the long evening they go on talking about sex, but more discreetly—with less bawdiness and bravura. Arcand isn't out to expose these people as spiritually empty; he's trying to present a truthful look at how they live. And he's a highly skilled filmmaker: he slips in flashbacks without breaking the flow of talk or jostling the ravishing natural changes in the light at the lake. There's nothing weighty in his approach; it's a lovely, very unassuming picture, yet there is enough drama so that by the end a subtle shift in all the relationships is necessary. And the foreground action and the flashbacks that had been providing the background begin to merge. The film is structured like a concerto for nine instruments. (A ninth character, an outsider, joins the group at the dinner table.) In French. (12/15/86) (Paris.)

Dr. Strangelove (1964)—Stanley Kubrick's fantastically bold and abusive comedy, starring Peter Sellers, George C. Scott, Sterling Hayden, Keenan Wynn, and Slim Pickens. (Thalia SoHo; Dec. 26-27.)

Down by Law—Jim Jarmusch's low-key minimalist comedy about American anomie, shot in black-and-white. The setting is New Orleans, where two deadbeats—Jack, an ineffectual pimp (John Lurie), and Zack, an itinerant disk jockey (Tom Waits)—become the victims of frameups and are put in the same prison cell, where they vegetate in hostile silence. Everything changes when a little, life-loving Italian, Roberto (Roberto Benigni), is put in with them; the three become pals, grinning and talking together. And, eventually, Roberto devises an escape

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

plan. Jarmusch's passive style has its wit, but the style is deadening here until he brings in Roberto—a character out of folk humor. With Ellen Barkin, Billie Neal, Nicoletta Braschi, Rockets Redglare, and Vernel Bagneris. (10/20/86) (Quad Cinema.)

The Elephant Man (1980)—A very pleasurable surprise. The by now well-known story of John Merrick, the grievously eminent Victorian who is sometimes said to have been the ugliest man who ever lived, is told by the young director David Lynch with such grace and imagination that it becomes a tale of a terrible enchantment. Inside Merrick's misshapen body is an astonishingly sweet-souled gentleman of his era. John Hurt plays Merrick, and Anthony Hopkins is Frederick Treves, the doctor who rescues him from the world of sideshows. With John Gielgud, Wendy Hiller, Hannah Gordon, and Anne Bancroft. (Thalia; Dec. 26-27.)

Forbidden Planet (1956)—The best of the science-fiction interstellar productions of the fifties lifted its plot and atmosphere from Shakespeare: the magical island of "The Tempest" becomes the planet Altair-4. The magician Prospero becomes the mad scientist Morbius (Walter Pidgeon); Prospero's daughter Miranda, who knows no man except her father, is Altaira (Anne Francis); and the sprite Ariel becomes Robby, the friendly robot. Caliban has become a marvellously flamboyant monster out of Freud—pure id. It's a pity the film, directed by Fred Wilcox, didn't lift some of Shakespeare's dialogue: it's hard to believe you're in the heavens when the diction of the hero (Leslie Nielsen) and his spaceshipmates flattens you down to Kansas. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Dec. 23.)

Meet John Doe (1941)—An odd, socially conscious picture, directed by Frank Capra and starring Gary Cooper and Barbara Stanwyck, about a man who tries to commit suicide in order to call attention to a right-wing plot. For the sake of a happy ending that would keep Gary Cooper alive, the meanings were so distorted that the original authors sued. With Edward Arnold, Walter Brennan, James Gleason, Regis Toomey, Spring Byington, and Gene Lockhart. (Thalia SoHo; Dec. 24-25.)

Men...—When the handsome, self-centered Julius (Heiner Lauterbach), a Munich advertising executive, discovers that his wife (Ulrike Kriener) has been having an affair with the oafish Stefan (Uwe Ochsenknecht), a long-haired bohemian, he wants to know what Stefan's attraction is, so he assumes a false name and moves in with him. Julius takes some kind of revenge by turning Stefan into an orderly bourgeois with a regular job; while that happens, whimsical gags are tossed together with a jocular feminist exposé of men's attitudes toward women. The picture is harmless and insipid, in the mode of French farces such as "Cousin, Cousine;" it sags in the middle and then collapses in an absurdist ending. Written and directed by Doris Dörrie. In German. (9/8/86) (Lincoln Plaza.)

Ménage—The first half hour of this sex farce is wonderfully brisk and slam-bang provocative: the writer-director Bertrand Blier violates old formulas and experiments with ideas of subversion and chaos. Gérard Depardieu, huge, and with the belly of a bear, is the burglar who, at night in a café, overhears the callous bitchy wife, Miou-Miou, bawling out her loving husband Michel Blanc—a wisp of a man, meek, sad-eyed and bald—because he can't make enough money to please her. Enamored of the mousy husband, Depardieu slugs the wife, throws a mess of money at her, and then takes the two along on his surreally easy burglaries and showers the loot on them, waiting for his chance to bed the man. During the house break-ins, Blier has a comic inspiration: the rich victims are so bored that they love the excitement of being robbed. But he drops this and concentrates on Depardieu's seduction of Blanc, which is only briefly amusing. It's the first step in his screwball-fable demonstration of how arbitrary sex preferences are. By the time that Miou-Miou has been sold to a pimp and the two men are in drag, working as prostitutes, Blier is trying so hard to be outrageous that he loses the beat; the outrageousness comes to seem another kind of bondage to formula. Depardieu has learned how to push everybody around and take over the screen; he's an accomplished clown (and that jaw of his is hilarious when you first see him made up as a woman), but his other qualities seem to have disappeared—at least, they're not in evidence here. With Bruno Cremer. In French. (Cinema Studio.)

Mona Lisa—Directed by the Irish novelist turned moviemaker Neil Jordan, the whole movie has some of the potency of cheap music that's represented by the title song (in Nat King Cole's 1950 recording). The short, chunky Bob Hoskins is tremendous as a one-time petty crook, just emerged from prison; given the job of chauffering a black call girl (Cathy Tyson) on her nightly rounds, he falls in love with her. She sets him to searching for a friend she's worried about—a blond fifteen-year-old heroin addict. As he makes his way through the strip joints and whores' hangouts, he's sickened by the way the girls are mistreated, and he sees that his old boss (Michael Caine) is in the rotten thick of it. Jordan shows a gift for making the emotional atmosphere visual, and vice versa. And the way he uses baroque touches and the clichés of old thrillers they become part of a fluid, enjoyable texture. With Robbie Coltrane, Clarke Peters, and Zoe Nathenson. Script by Jordan and David Leland. (6/16/86) (New Gramercy; through Dec. 18.... ¶ New Carnegie; Dec. 19-24.... ¶ Film Forum; starting Dec. 19.)

The Mouse That Roared (1959)—This is the English comedy in which Peter Sellers made his first big impression on American moviegoers. It's about a minuscule mythical country, Grand Fenwick, that declares war on the United States, expecting to be quickly defeated and thus eligible for the cash benefits of rehabilitation. The film abandons its small, amusing idea and goes off on a wearying tangent about a scientist (David Kossoff) with a big bomb and an ingénue daughter (Jean Seberg), but it was hugely and inexplicably popular. Leo McKern and William Hartnell are in the cast. Jack Arnold directed. (Thalia SoHo; Dec. 26-27.)

My Beautiful Laundrette—A startlingly fresh movie about life in South London among the surly white street gangs and the Pakistani immigrants. In the foreground is a love affair between a dark-eyed, softly handsome, almost flowerlike Pakistani teen-ager, Omar (Gordon Warnecke), and a young blond street lout, Johnny (Daniel Day Lewis). They become partners when Omar persuades his slumlord uncle (Saeed Jaffrey) to let him have a ratty-looking failed laundrette, and the two boys, using stolen money, turn it into the laundrette of their flashy dreams. Directed by Stephen Frears, from a witty script by the young playwright Hanif Kureishi, the film catches you up in the racketeering and decay of modern big-city life; you feel that your blinders have been taken off. It's an enormous pleasure to see a movie that's really about something, and that doesn't lay on any syrupy coating to make the subject go down easily. (It's down before you notice it.) The cast includes Shirley Anne Field, Roshan Seth, Rita Wolf, and Souad Faress. (3/10/86) (Bleecker St. Cinema.)

Open City (1945)—Roberto Rossellini burst upon the world with this film, made just after the Allies took Rome. The fame of his brutal, melodramatic account of the underground resistance to the Nazi occupation rests on its extraordinary immediacy and its rough, documentary look; at its most startling, it seems "caught" rather than staged. Many Americans mistook the great Anna Magnani and Aldo Fabrizi, Maria Michi, and the other actors for nonprofessionals—this despite such stock elements as a rapacious lesbian Gestapo agent and a Hollywood-and-Vine-type Gestapo chief. The plot devices are often opportunistic, but there's a unifying fervor; shot on odds and ends of film stock, with fluctuating electricity, and showing people who a few weeks before had been part of the events, the movie gave us a cross-section of a city under terrible stress. In Italian. (Thalia; Dec. 23.)

Peggy Sue Got Married—Distressed by her marital troubles, Peggy Sue (Kathleen Turner), the mother of two grownup children, collapses at the twenty-fifth reunion of her high-school class, and when she wakes up she discovers that she has gone back in time to the spring of 1960. Directed by Francis Coppola, this is a dream movie that asks whether Peggy Sue, knowing what she does at forty-

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three, should marry the same boy—passionate Charlie (Nicolas Cage), the only man she ever dated—knowing that he'll turn into the man who introduces himself on television as Crazy Charlie, the Appliance King. The underlying question is: Should Peggy Sue reconcile with her husband or go ahead and get a divorce? Coppola's efforts to bring depth to this material that has no depth make the picture seem groggy. It's as if he were trying to reach through a veil of fog. With Barbara Harris, Barry Miller, and Kevin J. O'Connor. (10/20/86) (Quad Cinema, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Gemini; through Dec. 18. . . . ¶ Olympia Quad. Evenings only, starting Dec. 19.)

A Room with a View—Adapted from the early novel by E. M. Forster, this is a whimsical social comedy about a muddled young English girl (Helena Bonham-Carter) who desires yet fears sexual love; she runs away from the man (Julian Sands) who stirs her emotions, and becomes engaged to a rich twit (Daniel Day Lewis). Bonham-Carter lacks the carriage and presence of a trained actress, and Sands is playing Forster's flimsy—almost abstract—dream of a natural, uninhibited lover, and is rather vague. But the movie is well paced, and it never loses its hold on a viewer's affections, because it's so thoroughly inhabited. It's more than a little precious, but it's a piece of charming foolishness. With Denholm Elliott, Maggie Smith, Judi Dench, Simon Callow, and Rosemary Leach. It was directed by James Ivory, from a script by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala that pares down the text skillfully and takes much of its lively, dizzy dialogue directly from Forster. (3/24/86) (Quad Cinema, and Embassy 72nd St.)

Round Midnight—Most of Bertrand Tavernier's mournful, blue-toned movie, which, an opening title tells us, was "inspired by incidents in the lives of Francis Paudras and Bud Powell," is set in Paris in 1959. The French jazz enthusiast Paudras is now called Francis Borier and is played by François Cluzet, and Powell, the great bebop pianist, who suffered frequent nervous breakdowns and then made a new life abroad, is now the dazed, alcoholic tenor-sax man Dale Turner, and is played by the near-legendary Dexter Gordon. The enthusiast is a saintly groupie. You know what kind of movie it's going to be when you see this guy out in a drenching rain, crouched against the building where the American is playing, because he doesn't have the money to go in. Cluzet is soaking wet, but his eyes shine and he listens to Dexter Gordon's music worshipfully. The French are pretty hard to take when they celebrate how much they love American art. You may come out with the feeling that Tavernier is proud of the gloomy dullness of the movie, that he sees virtue in it. With Sandra Reaves-Phillips, Lonette McKee, John Berry, Martin Scorsese, Philippe Noiret, and many well-known musicians. (Plaza, and R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin; through Dec. 18. . . . ¶ D. W. Griffith, and Metro Cinema; starting Dec. 19.)

She's Gotta Have It—The voluptuous, easygoing Nola (Tracy Camila Johns), a graphic designer who lives in the black bohemian world in Brooklyn, is happily juggling three lovers when she's faced by a mock crisis: each of the three men has turned possessive and wants to be her one and only. That's the premise of this quick-witted sex comedy written, directed, and edited by the twenty-nine-year-old Spike Lee, who shot it in 16-mm. in twelve days, on an almost nonexistent budget. Nola, her three lovers, and her family and friends explain themselves directly to the camera, and the film's basic set is Nola's bed; you can't shoot a movie much cheaper or faster than that. Lee's economies become part of what's enjoyable about the film, and he keeps it all sparking and bouncing along. With Tommy Redmond Hicks, John Canada Terrell, and Lee himself. (10/6/86) (Quad Cinema, and Criterion Center.)

Something Wild—Jonathan Demme's romantic screwball comedy isn't just about a carefree kook (Melanie Griffith) and a pompous man from Wall Street (Jeff Daniels). The movie is about crossing over—about getting high on anarchic, larcenous behavior and then being confronted with ruthless, sadistic criminality. This rough-edged comedy has a freedom that takes off from its genre framework; it breaks conventions and turns into a scary slapstick thriller. Demme weaves the stylization of rock videos into the fabric of the movie; there are almost fifty songs (or parts of songs), several of them performed onscreen. This is a party movie with both a dark and a light side. With Ray Liotta, Dana Preu, and Margaret Colin. (11/17/86) (Olympia Quad; through Dec. 18, evenings only. . . . ¶ Baronet, and Criterion Center; through Dec. 18. . . . ¶ Movieland 8th Street Triplex; through Dec. 24.)

Song of the South (1946)—Musical version of Joel Chandler Harris's stories—sentimental, and offensive to some, but often effective. From the Disney studios, and employing both animation and live actors (James Baskette, Hattie McDaniel, Bobby Driscoll, Lucille Watson, Ruth Warrick, Luana Patten). (23rd St. West Triplex, and Olympia Quad; through Dec. 18, matinées only. . . . ¶ Eastside Cinema, Guild, and New Embassy 49th Street; through Dec. 18.)

Stand By Me—On a summer weekend in 1959, four twelve- and thirteen-year-old boys from the fictional Castle Rock, Oregon (pop. 1,281), go on an overnight hike in the woods outside town to look for the body of a boy their age who has been missing for several days. The four, misfits who feel rejected, keep intuiting one another's emotions, and they're plucky—when they get in tight spots, they stand by each other. Rob Reiner's film, taken from Stephen King's autobiographical novella "The Body," overdoses on sincerity and nostalgia. Seeing it is like watching an extended Christmas Special of "The Waltons." With Wil Wheaton, River Phoenix, Jerry O'Connell, Corey Feldman, Andy Lindberg, and, as the narrator, Richard Dreyfuss. (9/8/86) (Olympia Quad; through Dec. 18, evenings only. . . . ¶ Embassy; through Dec. 23.)

The 39 Steps (1935)—This suave, amusing spy melodrama is directed with so sure a touch that the suspense is charged with wit: it's one of the three or four best things Hitchcock ever did. The lead, Robert Donat, was that rarity among English actors: a performer with both personal warmth and professional skill. The heroine is Madeleine Carroll. Hitchcock paired them off by the mischievous use of a gimmick: a man and a woman who detest each other are handcuffed together; as day wears into night, they fall in love. The movie thus contains an extra—implicit, as it were—element of bathroom-humor suspense. The film also has one of his rare emotionally felt sequences: the brief, chilling scenes between Peggy Ashcroft and John Laurie as a mismated couple joined together by real chains. With Godfrey Tearle. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Dec. 26-27.)

The Time Machine (1960)—Entertaining George Pal sci-fi, loosely derived from the H. G. Wells novel and set at about the time the book was written—1895. The plush Victorian furnishings in the home of the time-travelling scientist (Rod Taylor) are contrasted with the catacombs of the cannibalistic future, where Yvette Mimieux is a dainty morsel on the menu. The time-travel effects help to make this film one of the best of its kind. However, it deteriorates into comic-strip grotesqueries when the fat, ogreish future race of Morlocks torments the effete, platinum-blond, vacant-eyed race of Eloi. With Alan Young, Sebastian Cabot, and Whit Bissell. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Dec. 23.)

True Stories—This first feature directed by David Byrne, of Talking Heads, is laid out like a musical-comedy documentary about a town, except that the town—Virgil, Texas—is imaginary. Byrne, the narrator and observer, introduces us to the townspeople who are about to take part in the pageantry of the Texas Sesquicentennial with their own "Celebration of Specialness." Byrne is looking for a true mythic image of America; Virgil is Our Town, it's Anytown, U.S.A., and the movie is about banality and eccentricity and consumerism. Byrne sets up the material for satirical sequences, yet he doesn't give it a satirical spin. The picture's tone is often insecure, but, working with the crack cinematographer Ed Lachman, Byrne brings a new visual sensibility to the screen (a respect for pared-down plainness), and after a rather shaky opening the characters themselves begin to engage us. With John Goodman, Jo Harvey Allen, Tito Larriva, Roebuck (Pops) Staples, Swoosie Kurtz, Spalding Gray, Annie McEnroe, and Alix Elias. The script is by Byrne, Beth Henley, and Stephen Tobolowsky. (10/20/86) (8th St. Playhouse. . . . ¶ Beekman, and Metro Cinema; through Dec. 18.)

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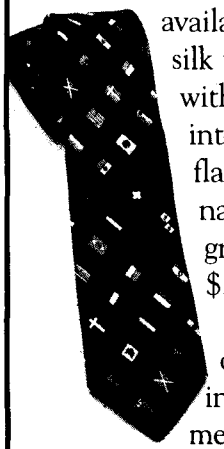

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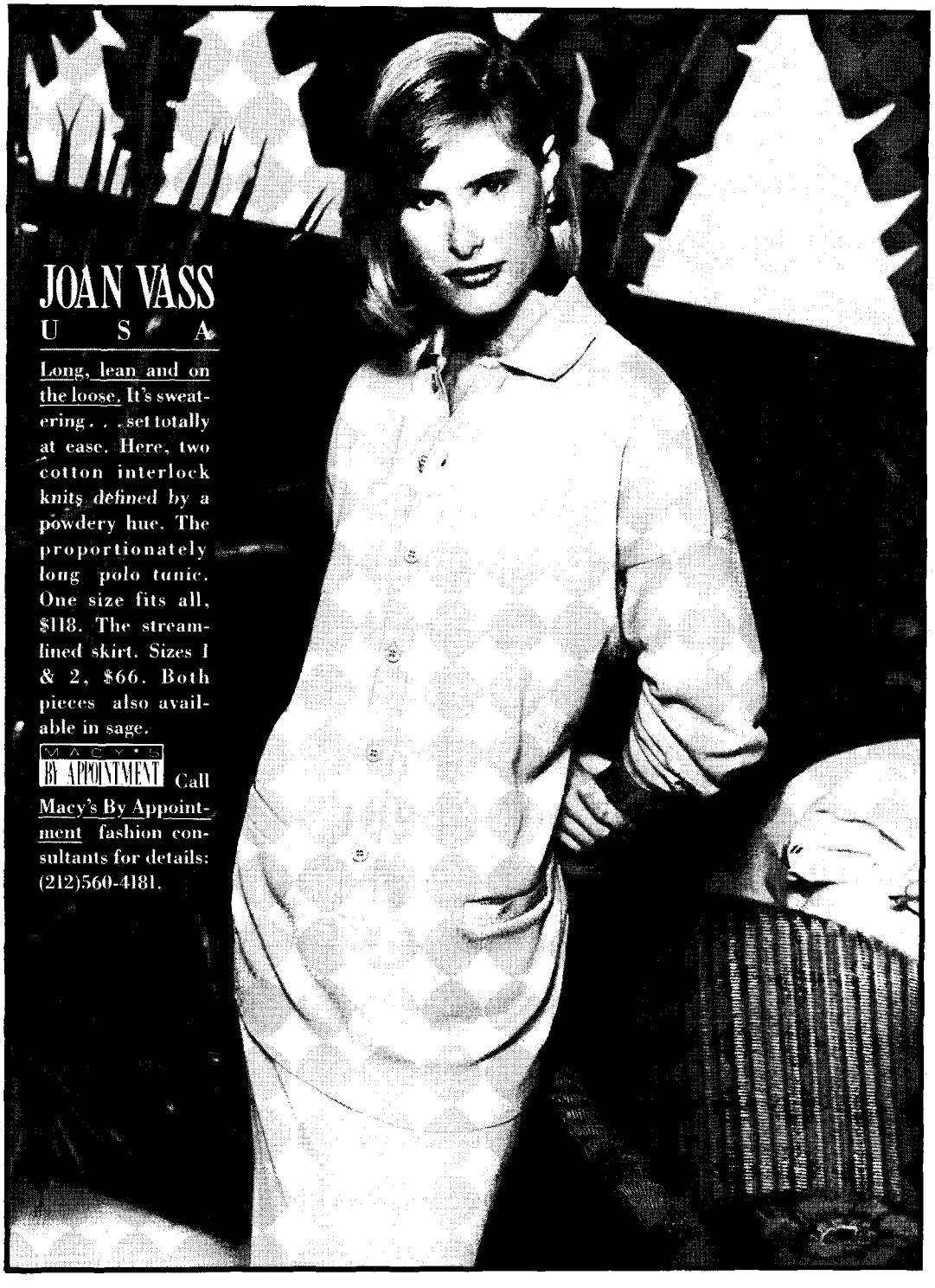
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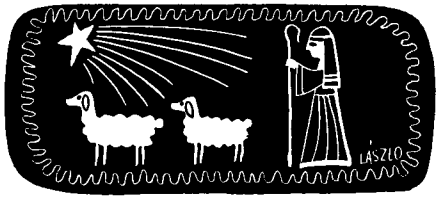
THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

IN the period since the end of the Second World War, people have repeatedly wondered whether our Constitution, an eighteenth-century document, adopted at a time when the United States was a negligible power in the world and was separated from other countries by days or weeks of ocean travel, is an adequate instrument for the guidance of our affairs in the twentieth century—especially in the sphere of foreign policy. The domestic sphere, after all, is a sphere of law, enforced by the government (what some of the eighteenth-century philosophers who inspired the Constitution called a "civil state"), whereas the international sphere is a sphere of lawlessness (what the philosophers called a "state of nature"). As long as the United States was kept distant from world affairs, there was little tension between the two spheres, but once it became involved conflicts arose. It seemed reasonable, at least, to worry that if a President entered the lawless international arena feeling himself bound by the laws and standards of domestic American political life he would be at an unfair disadvantage, and the nation he governed would wind up a "pitiful, helpless giant," as Richard Nixon put it. When a great power is on the move abroad or is locked in struggle with another great power around the world—this one a power unconstrained by a press, a constitution, rival governmental powers, any assertion of individual rights, or public opinion—should it keep itself shackled by domestic fetters? Isn't this a formula for defeat? Shouldn't we in the United States at the very least acknowledge that while the Constitution still appropriately applies to some areas of our national life there is now in existence an area in which it cannot apply—an area in which the requirements of national security in the nuclear age override its provisions? For example, is the war-declaring power of Congress any longer relevant or workable? Should an arrangement designed for a world of sailing ships and muskets be continued in a world of communications satellites and nuclear-armed ballistic missiles? And what of the separation of powers in general? In our time of incessant fast-paced interaction on many levels with the entire world, shouldn't the conduct of foreign policy be frankly ceded to the executive branch, for isn't it alone capable of marshalling the facts and acting with the necessary dispatch? Shouldn't the rights of the individual, while being preserved as much as possible, yield when they conflict with the survival of the nation as a whole? Shouldn't the Constitution, like political partisanship, stop at the water's edge? Shouldn't we recognize that national security is an aim of government which does not so much come under the Constitution as stand alongside it, at times superseding it? Are we not, at best, in a sort of tragic situation in which the legal requirements of a constitutional republic inevitably collide with the practical requirements of a great power acting in a brutal world?

The history of the postwar period abundantly demonstrates that the questions are at least well founded. On three distinct occasions in those years, people in power have mounted serious challenges to the rule of law and the Constitution in the name of national security. The first challenge was that of Senator Joseph McCarthy, who trampled on the rights of individuals and ran roughshod over the normal, legal procedures of government in a campaign to ferret out Communists who he said were in the government. Before he was censured by the Senate, in 1954, he had managed to intimidate two Administrations and to strike fear into the whole country—a fear that persists today in politicians' dread of being found "soft" on Communism. The second challenge was the constitutional crisis that was born of the Vietnam War and culminated in the Watergate affair, in which (among many other things that happened) two former Attorney Generals were sentenced to jail and a President was forced to resign under threat of impeachment. The crisis began in the early nineteen-sixties, when President Kennedy surreptitiously permitted American "advisers" to engage in combat; it continued with President Johnson's expansion of the American presence into a full-scale fighting force; and it came to its conclusion with President Nixon's grandiose claims of almost unlimited executive power and immunity from the law as he was tracked down by law-enforcement agencies and Congress. Throughout this crisis, three Presidents justified their circumvention of Congress and the law by invoking the overriding needs of national security. The third challenge, of course, is the nameless present one of a secret, runaway foreign policy in regard to Iran and Nicaragua which appears to violate the executive's own professed policies as well as those of Congress. Anyone who doubts that this challenge, too, is at bottom to the Constitution and the law has only to read the recent article in the Washington *Post* by Patrick Buchanan, the White House communications director, in which he mounts a spirited defense of lawbreaking when it is carried out with noble goals



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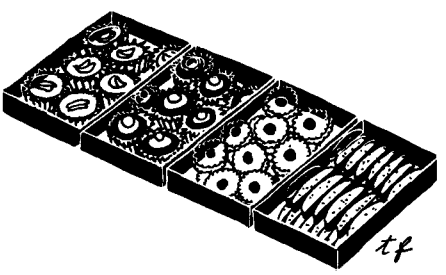
in mind. As "heroes" who broke the law he cites people who "ran escaped slaves up the underground Railroad to Canada;" Franklin Roosevelt, who "secretly ordered American destroyers to hunt down German submarines in the North Atlantic and to relay the information to the British fleet;" and "those Americans who ran guns to Palestine in 1947 and 1948." Of course, there is a crucial difference between, on the one hand, private citizens who, like the operators of the underground railroad or the gunrunners to Palestine, break the law by taking it on themselves, for reasons of conscience, to make use of whatever private resources they can marshal and, on the other, public officials who use governmental power to pursue private purposes. The former are exercising the inalienable right, which no law can take away, to risk one's own life and liberty for what one sees as a moral imperative. The latter are betraying a public trust. If a public official believes that a law is so outrageous that it must be broken, the proper course for him is to resign from office, take a public stand, and then, as a private citizen, break the law and accept the consequences. As for President Roosevelt, one can say only that if he broke the law—and many historians do not think he did—he shouldn't have and his action certainly shouldn't stand as a model for future Presidents.

Each of the three postwar political crises might seem at first glance to confirm the tragic view that conflicts between our constitutional system and our role as a great power are inevitable. When one takes a second look, however, another feature of these crises meets the eye: a self-defeating quality is present in each. If there are occasions when individual liberties must yield to the needs of national security, McCarthy's hunt for Communists in the government was not among them; he never found one Communist. Nor does the Vietnam War, in retrospect, look like a great triumph for the national-security interests of the United States; it looks like an unqualified disaster, just one of whose almost immeasurable dire effects was the Watergate crisis. If we are supposed to believe that in matters of war and peace Presidents make wiser decisions than Congress, then someone will have to bring forward something other than the Vietnam War to demonstrate the point. The historical verdicts on our attempts to ransom hostages with arms sales to Iran and to illegally fund the Contras are not in yet, but these endeavors do not have the smell of success about them, either. The point, of course, is not that if the efforts had succeeded they would have been justified. It is that every time the constitutional system has been challenged in the name of national security the policy has failed even in its own terms. In view of this record, it appears that the Constitution isn't as outmoded as we may have feared. If it had been observed faithfully, the venerable document would have saved us from the three worst political mistakes in our postwar national life.

•

A FRIEND of ours—and a friend of the Constitution, too—writes:

I made a rare trip to Washington, D.C., in the middle of this month and, being early for an appointment, found myself wandering the corridors of the Rayburn House Office Building. One thing I like about the Capitol and its adjoining buildings is that you can stroll through the wide halls endlessly and no one stops you. Mostly, the Rayburn corridors just wind past the offices of various representatives, each with his name and his state inscribed on his thick oak door. You think about Kentucky for a dozen paces, and then you read the next door and imagine Mississippi. Rounding one corner, I came upon a high stack of cardboard boxes. No one was looking, so I read the ballpoint label on each. "La. Fiscal—'78," said one. Another said, "Special Projects, C.O.E. Atchafalaya Basin." I looked at the name on the nearest door, and, sure enough, it belonged to Representative W. Henson Moore, of Louisiana, a Republican who had run for the Senate this fall and lost and was now moving out. A few hundred yards farther on, a sign outside a busy temporary-looking office read "Freshman Representative Service Center." When the time came, I presented myself at the office of the representative I was there to see—a kindly-seeming man with a photograph of Georgia O'Keeffe on his wall—and he introduced me to one of his assistants, a woman who spends her days keeping track of certain agencies within the Interior Department. She probably knows as much about those agencies as anyone in the country, and she handed me several big volumes of reports of a subcommittee that oversees them. One report covered 1985, another 1986, and she and the congressman invited me to next year's hearings, which would begin, he said, "after the Lincoln holiday." I resumed my wandering through the hallways. Down one flight, on the first floor of the Rayburn Building, a cloud of reporters waited outside the closed door of a hearing room where William Casey, the director of the Central Intelligence Agency, was testifying before the House Foreign Affairs Committee.



Across the street, Terry Sanford, the newly elected Democratic senator from North Carolina, was being sworn in. Fifteen hundred of his constituents had come to watch—more than the Senate gallery could accommodate—so the ceremony had been moved to the Capitol steps. I walked into the Capitol through the south entrance. Up in the Senate Chamber, which was deserted, a guard explained to a few tourists sitting in the gallery that senators begin their careers in the back rows and move forward as their seniority increases. He talked, also, about the new television cameras covering the proceedings. The tourists were full of questions about that innovation, and most of them seemed worried. They worried about how bright the lights were, and whether the cameras bothered the senators. As I sat there, I realized that these things worried me, too: change should come slowly; some changes should not come at all. You should not wake up some morning to find that the President, impatient with Congress, has ordered the C.I.A. not to tell it about certain operations, or that his staff, frustrated by certain laws, has thought of ways to evade them. Why not? Not because our system is so wise (although I think it is). Because it's our system. That's how we do things.

• •

Focussed

IF you don't care for "Bite'n My Stylee" backed with "Pump That Base/Live (Get a Little Stupid . . . HO!)," the new single from

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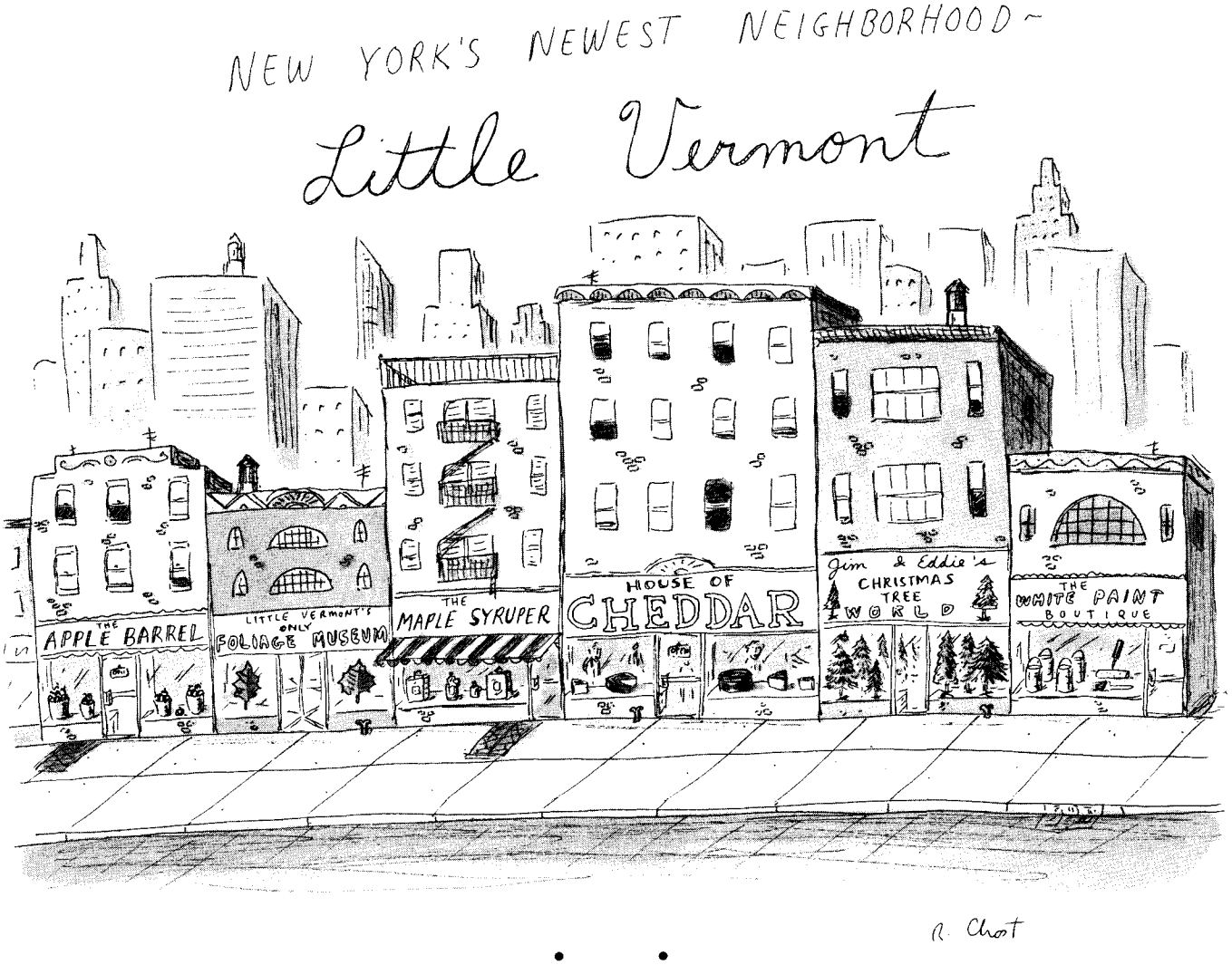

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the Original Concept, or for Nu Shooz, or for the Oran (Juice) Jones recording of "The Rain," or for "Freedom Overspill," the new Steve Winwood hit, or for Klymaxx's recent smash "Man Size Love," which was the fifteenth song in the history of the *Billboard* charts to peak at No. 15 *and* spend fifteen weeks on the chart, or for the remake of that great old tune "Spirit in the Sky," by Doctor & the Medics; if you would really just as soon not hear anything by the Meat Puppets, or "Roaches," by Bobby Jimmy & the Critters (a spinoff of that summer hit "Rumors," by Timex Social Club), or anything that Timbuk 3 might release, or Greg X. Volz, "the voice of Christian Rock;" or if you just frankly don't enjoy "You Be Illin'," by Run-D.M.C., or "All Cried Out," by Lisa Lisa & Cult Jam with Full Force, or even Jermaine Stewart's smash "We Don't Have to Take Our Clothes Off"—well, then the Boss Club might be where you want to be being. None of those songs play at the Boss Club—only songs by Bruce Springsteen.

The Boss Club, which opened late last month, operates one night a week at an upper East Side night spot, Freckles, that used to be called Scotland Yard. "The original Boss Club is in Los Angeles," said Peter Martin, a Tenafly, New Jersey, native, who runs the New York operation. "It started out just as a place for hard-core Bruce fans to party, but then, as Bruce became a phenomenon, it became a phenomenon. It has transcended pure Springsteen fans. The Brat Packers went there. Rob Lowe was there practically every week. Judd Nelson goes there. Martha Quinn, from MTV, has been there. Bruce hasn't been there—he'd get mobbed." The man who bought the car used in the video for "Born in the U.S.A." also attended the L.A. Boss Club, having made a pilgrimage from New Jersey in the vehicle. He is hoping that the "Bruce Car" will be featured on lunchboxes, T-shirts, and that sort of thing, but so far the Springsteen management team hasn't got back to him.

An immigrant Irishman, Frank Campbell, manages Freckles, which also holds a weekly party for people who have been guests at one of the Club Med resorts. "We sprinkle sand on the floor, and the staff wears shorts," he said. Mike London, the club's d.j., enjoys jazz, jazz fusion, the Art of Noise, and Philip Glass. The popular drink at the club last year was peppermint schnapps. This year, it is peach schnapps, which, mixed with vodka and cranberry juice, becomes a Woo-Woo. We believe that the Boss Club concept can be expanded: that instead of having simply Chinese restaurants, or even Szechuan Chinese restaurants, New York should have restaurants where only beef with broccoli and snow peas is served, and other restaurants offering just chicken with cashews. We favor laundromats just for pants. "There are as many Yuppies as ever," said Mr. Campbell, who used to work around the corner at another bar. "We get a lot of ex-Mount Holyoke and ex-Colgate preppies," he continued. "They don't last very long—maybe two or three years—but there are always more to take their place. I

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wish I knew what is going to replace peach schnapps. If you have any ideas, let me know."

Ferryboat Comeback

THE Port Imperial, the brand-new Hudson River ferryboat that is regularly making the three-quarter-mile-long trip between West Thirty-eighth Street and a pier in Weehawken in three minutes flat, has a zippy, dashing, Coast Guard-cutter, "Miami Vice" feeling about it which immediately sets it apart from the ponderous, patient, contemplative old steamboats, like the Elmira and the Binghamton, that made the trans-Hudson run until ferry service vanished from the river almost twenty years ago—never to return, most people then thought (although the Binghamton has survived as a floating restaurant in Edgewater, New Jersey). At the same time, the Port Imperial, which is seventy-seven feet long and low-slung, white outside and blue inside, with beige benches and two decks—an open-air upper deck and an enclosed but well-windowed lower deck—has contrived to inherit three of the most prized qualities of the old steamers: it rides smoothly, operates quietly, and is a reliable boat.

Besides all that, the Port Imperial is relatively inexpensive, is easy to handle and maintain, and has a completely new design—a concept that popped into the head of Luther Blount, a distinguished shipbuilder in Warren, Rhode Island, when he was laid up in a hospital in 1981 after a serious operation. Blount, who was already known as the father of the modern small cruise ship and the father of the modern American stern-trawling fishing boat, now came up with the composite lightweight ferryboat, which is something like a high-speed life jacket. It has an aluminum frame, aluminum decks, and a fibre-glass skin, which keep it lightweight and fast-moving (the Port Imperial did about twenty-six knots on its maiden voyage), and the spaces in between are filled with polyurethane foam, which is as buoyant and virtually unsinkable as a plastic-foam cup. The foam also absorbs the noise and vibrations of the engines, just as the wooden superstructures of the old steamboats did.

The engines in this case are two General Motors engines that are similar to truck engines—a feature that helped recommend the composite lightweight ferryboat to Arthur E. Imperatore, the operator of the new Weehawken ferry service, who owns a New Jersey trucking business. Imperatore also owns two miles of river-front land below the Palisades in Weehawken and West New York, and plans to develop it as a city—Port Imperial—with ten million square feet of commercial space, ten thousand housing units, a major cultural center, and some kind of park by the water. He hopes to link his ferry to a new trolley line that would run along the west bank of the river and continue five miles inland to the Meadowlands Sports Complex. That would give New Yorkers direct mass-transit access to the Meadowlands, and would also mean that more New Jersey commuters could leave their cars in its parking lots, which are largely empty by day. The new ferry has already cut the commuting time of Weehawkenites drastically: it can take an hour and a half to drive from Weehawken to midtown Manhattan during the morning rush hour—and that's going through the Lincoln Tunnel, which runs almost underneath the ferry.

The maiden voyage of the Port Imperial took place on Wednesday, December 3rd, when the boat left Weehawken at 2:58 P.M., just as the sun broke through a thick bank of dark clouds; and the event was preceded by a lavish reception in a conical white tent (iced shrimp and piping-hot crabmeat au gratin) with speechmaking by almost every major political figure in New Jersey, including Governor Tom Kean, Senators Bill Bradley and Frank Lautenberg, Representative Robert Roe, and Weehawken's Mayor Stanley Iacono, who was there with his wife, Ann-Marie. Only one major personage was missing, to our way of thinking—our wonderful old friend the late Ernest M. Frimbo, the world's greatest railroad (and steamboat and ferryboat) buff, with whom, on the night before Thanksgiving in 1967, we had made the last crossing of the last of the old Hudson steam ferries, the Elmira, from Barclay Street to Hoboken. As the old boat slipped through the evening fog, its deep-

"Yeah, it's a beautiful day, but I really prefer black-and-white."

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brown sides and gold-leaf lettering gleaming faintly in the running lights of passing tugboats, while the captain held back his tears and most of the passengers devoted themselves to ripping down orange life jackets from overhead racks to take home as souvenirs, only Frimbo, his black homburg perched solidly on his head, seemed to gaze beyond the deck into a future that once again included ferryboats. How he would have beamed at the Port Imperial (and the shrimp and the crabmeat) as it vindicated him in the belief that he had witnessed not an extinction but only a blip in the three-hundred-year story of Hudson ferry crossings. How he would have cheered the Port Imperial's easy demolition of the myth that New York and New Jersey are poles apart. (Frimbo, a New Yorker, was also a Princeton man.) We could almost hear him saying, "They look at the mighty Hudson and see only a Berlin Wall or the Green Line that separates Muslim Beirut from Christian Beirut. But when New Jersey and New York are a mere three minutes apart they are by common reckoning in the same neighborhood. Because your neighborhood is defined by the distance you will go to get to a dry cleaner's or a deli or a coffee shop. For most people, that extends about three blocks—the distance they can cover, walking at a sensible pace, in three minutes."

"Mother sends Season's Greetings with her love to you, Lydia. She says how she does so wish to spend the holidays with us but she knows that would mean we would have to drive five hundred and fifty miles to her house, as it is impossible for her to accept our invitation to come to our house, since our house, being so untidy, no offense intended, in parentheses, makes her uncomfortable to the point of actually causing her to become physically ill, but that she is willing to be a martyr all alone in order to keep everybody happy, while at the same time she is hoping with all the strength her aged bones can muster that we shall decide to drive to her house, knowing every mile of the five hundred and fifty miles that we are helping to make an old lady's heart very happy happy happy."

• •

Looking at the hundreds of people who were taking in the speeches, we realized that only a part of the crowd would make it onto the first crossing of the Port Imperial, which can accommodate a hundred and forty-nine. A piece of Frimbo's training sprang to mind, and we quietly slipped around to the boatside edge of the crowd, so that we would be right behind the dignitaries when it came time to embark. After all, we would never have heard the end of it from the old gent if we had told him we'd been on the second maiden voyage of the new boat. So it was that we got to the Port Imperial even ahead of Governor Kean, who was momentarily waylaid by a TV reporter and required the shrill cries of a New Jersey assemblyman ("Hey, Gov! C'mon, Tom!") to pry him loose. We found ourself on the afterdeck of the ferry, just a few feet above the water, standing next to Ann-Marie Iacono, the animated, dark-haired first lady of Weehawken, who was taking pictures of the Port Imperial—and of a New York City fireboat throwing plumes of spray into the sky to welcome the newcomer—for a scrapbook of Weehawken history she's preparing for her husband's office. "Weehawken has a lot of history to it, you know," she told us. "The man who created Ben-Gay had a thirty-two-room mansion there, Fred and Adele Astaire lived there, and Eddie Bracken moved away only recently." Behind us, a rooster tail of white water lengthened as the Port Imperial sped away from shore. A breeze poured into our face, and we seemed to be almost skating across the wide expanse of blue water toward the Empire State Building. Suddenly, the boat was nosing into the dock in Manhattan. It was almost too fast. Frimbo would have insisted on the Port Imperial's making at least one loop in the middle of the river before heading for land.

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THE TEEN-AGE NATIONAL DEBT

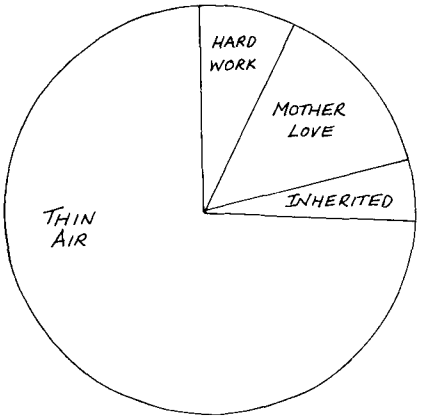
SUMMARY: Through love of NIGHT, teen-agers and their descendants have incurred a huge national debt. Prologue in graphics: Where it comes from, and where it goes. The Problem—a two-hour documentary (loosely based on "48 Hours on Crack Street," the CBS News extravaganza). Commentary. True tales of the NIGHT. The Problem is too great for even a seasoned reporter: you need a sociologist. The President speaks. Epilogue spoken by GLORIA, whose personal romantic inclinations have had an impact on the national debt.

PROLOGUE IN GRAPHICS:

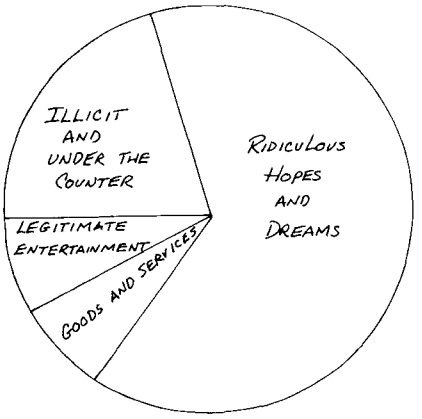
Where It Comes from and
Where It Goes

THE BUDGET DOLLAR
FISCAL YEAR 1986 ESTIMATE

WHERE IT COMES FROM



WHERE IT GOES



THE TEEN-AGE NATIONAL DEBT:
1—"48 HOURS ON DEBT STREET"

A two-hour documentary. Hard-hitting; no holds barred; may be strong for some viewers. View at your own risk. Be there or be square.

TITLE SEQUENCE

TIMES SQUARE SEGMENT: VIEWER DISCRETION URGED, MAY BE TOO STRONG FOR SOME. STRONG LANGUAGE! CLOSEUP OF GWENDA AND SUSIE MAY BE TOO CLOSE TO THE BONE! USE COMMON SENSE! BE THERE OR BE SQUARE!

MONTAGE OF "STRONG" SCENES FROM THE "STREET." SIGNS READ "NO $S DOWN" "ADULTS IN DEBT" "COSIGN NOW," ETC. WAILING SIRENS. CLOSEUP OF GWENDA AND SUSIE.

SEASONED REPORTER: So it's easy to go into debt?

SUSIE: Uh-huh.

SEASONED REPORTER: People are . . . people you know are . . .

SUSIE: In debt, sure.

SEASONED REPORTER (*indicating Gwenda*): This is your friend?

SUSIE: Yeah. Gwenda.

SEASONED REPORTER: And you told or said that Gwenda is going into debt now. Would you (*to Gwenda*) be willing to do that on camera?

GWENDA: Huh?

SEASONED REPORTER: It's easy to go into debt on the street?

GWENDA: Why, sure, you . . .

SEASONED REPORTER: Slow down. Now, could you tell me what percentage of people on the "street" are in debt now?

GWENDA: *All* these mo-fos be behind in they bills.

SEASONED REPORTER: *All* of them. That's incredible. That's just an amazing figure. How do they do it? How is it, in this day and age, out here on the "street," in this age and street, so to speak, that *all*, every one, of these mo-fos be debted? How be it? What is the . . . how can . . . what . . . by what *means* . . .

SUSIE: Plastic.

SEGUE TO: CLIPS OF THE COTTON CLUB IN HARLEM; OVER MEDLEY OF ELLINGTON TUNES: "RIDING ON A BLUE NOTE," "BOY MEETS HORN," "SLAP HAPPY," "THE GAL FROM JOE'S." PLEASURE-SEEKERS ON A "SPREE." BLACK AND TAN GIRLS. FLAPPERS WITH BOBBED HAIR. GIRL POURS CHEAP GIN DOWN FRONT OF DRESS, GRABS GUY BY THE HAIR AND FLINGS HIM AROUND BY HIS TOPKNOT.

VOICE OF SEASONED REPORTER: Sweet Street. That's what they called it. Going into debt is an American tradition.

SEGUE TO: BROOKLYN PARAMOUNT—FLASHING SIGN: "TONIGHT: ALAN FREED'S MOONDOG ROCK-AND-ROLL SPECTACULAR;" OVER MEDLEY OF ANTOINE "FATS" DOMINO TUNES—"BLUEBERRY HILL," "AIN'T THAT A SHAME," ETC.

VOICE OF SEASONED REPORTER: A fact of American life. We all like a little fun, but *what went wrong*?

SOUND OF POLICE SIRENS

CUT TO: EMERGENCY ROOM OF A WELL-KNOWN FINANCIAL INSTITUTION. CLOSEUP OF MARY'S FACE CONTORTED IN AGONY.

CUT TO: SEASONED REPORTER AND EMERGENCY TELLER.

SEASONED REPORTER: She's in . . .

EMERGENCY TELLER: Bankruptcy.

SEASONED REPORTER: And what can you do, what treatment . . .

EMERGENCY TELLER: Nothing. We give a little breath, provide a table, monitor the failures. All we can do, really, is to wait for the effects to pass out of the system.

SEASONED REPORTER: And you've been seeing more of this kind of—

EMERGENCY TELLER: *More*? *More*? *More*? Ha! Ha! Ha! (RAUCOUS, CYNICAL LAUGHTER. SHOT OF MARY NODDING OVER LITTLE OAK TABLE; SMALL BANK CALENDAR. TODAY'S DATE; LITTLE CARDBOARD STANDUP SIGNS SHOWING TODAY'S BEST RATE, ETC. SHOULD ECHO MARGARET BOURKE-WHITE PHOTOS WHICH WE HAVE ALL SEEN AND ADMIRED. MOVE MARY'S HEAD A LITTLE TO THE LEFT, PLEASE; NOW WE CAN GET THE OTHER SIGN IN: "BORROW FOR ANY WORTHWHILE REASON"—THAT'S GOOD.) More? I can't tell you! Double! Triple! (*To Seasoned Reporter*) Say, you're cute. What are you doing after the show? Lavoleer's is nice—have you seen the Heliport Room? Bring your own stuff! Hot!

CUT TO: KINESCOPE OF "THE ED SULLIVAN SHOW"—TWELVE YUGOSLAVIAN TUMBLERS FORM A HUMAN PYRAMID—THEN CUT TO: ELVIS PRESLEY, ABOVE THE WAIST ONLY.

VOICE OF SEASONED REPORTER: We all like a little fun . . . but something went wrong. What went wrong?

CUT TO: NATIONAL COMMERCIAL MESSAGES:

Squeezies Deluxe Ear Tissue
Mother of Mercy Large Gal Bras
InfraDig Cosmetic Surgeons
Coo-Coo Cola
ImPolitesse Cologne for Children
Coo-Coo Cola Classic

PUBLIC SERVICE: Hoo-Ray 4 Persons Death March.

STATION BREAK

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NATIONAL COMMERCIAL MESSAGE:
Coo-Coo Cola Classic Diet
with Aspirin
CUT TO: SEASONED REPORTER ON THE "STREET."

SEASONED REPORTER: Plastic. (*Holds up plastic credit card.*) Estimate: Five thousand new Americans a day try plastic. (*Holds up plastic card.*) More and more plastic like this is appearing on the streets and in the workplaces and the schoolyards of America. Fact: Plastic is easy to use, cheap, widely available. Just insert it—

CLOSEUP OF PLASTIC CARD BEING INSERTED INTO SLOT.

—and you are in.

SEASONED REPORTER STANDS NEXT TO SEASONED LAW-ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL IN TINY, SQUALID GLASS-ENCLOSED BOOTH.

A child could do this, couldn't he?

ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL: Yes, sir.

SEASONED REPORTER MOVES OVER TO CASH MACHINE.

SEASONED REPORTER: And this is . . .

ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL: A cash machine. Yes, sir.

SEASONED REPORTER: It's different than I thought it would be. And what kind of transactions can a person participate in, here in this, this box?

ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL: Just about anything you can think of, Dinny. We had one case where home equity was linked up to a machine . . .

SEASONED REPORTER: A person came into this booth . . .

ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL: A booth *like* this . . .

SEASONED REPORTER: And withdrew equity from his *home*?

ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL: Yes, sir, a lovely home in New Jersey.

SEASONED REPORTER: Can you describe it?

ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL: Saltbox, no pool but nice yard, living room, dining room . . .

SEASONED REPORTER: And the equity in that house was depleted from this booth. (*Pushing foot in pile of paper slips and discarded cash envelopes*) And what's this?

ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL: This is debt litter—what's left after the transaction.

SEASONED REPORTER: The *look*, the *smell*.

ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL: Yes, sir. Strong, sir.

SEASONED REPORTER: I would think a person would be afraid to come into a place like this.

ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL: They want it bad enough, they'll do anything, go anywhere.

SEASONED REPORTER: It's different than I thought it would be.

ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL: Better?

SEASONED REPORTER: Worse, much worse.

"Now, if you'll just sign right here, Mr. Hark, you'll make the biggest mistake of your life!"

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THE TEEN-AGE NATIONAL DEBT:
2—COMMENTARY: "What Went Wrong?"

LONG SHOT OF HIGHLY CREDIBLE NARRATOR SITTING AT LITTLE DESK THE SIZE OF A WAFER. IT MAY BE A WAFER. TO THE RIGHT OF THE NARRATOR IS A MAP OF ILLINOIS, TO THE LEFT A BEAT-UP SUITE OF BLACK LEATHER FURNITURE. NARRATOR WAVES "HI." N.B.: MUST GET SISTER TERESA OR MOTHER TERESA OR COUSIN TERESA OR SIMILAR HIGHLY CREDIBLE PERSON. NIX ON MARIO CUOMO OR BILLY GRAHAM FOR THIS JOB.

CREDIBLE NARRATOR: Do you remember brand loyalty? *I* do. Now you have to tie them down. I mean hand and foot. I'm talking about *fetters*. In one Midwestern state, the legislature has authorized indenturing for terms of five, six, seven years as a way of achieving brand stability. Switch brands before your term is up and you're going to pay quadruple damages, or, in some cases, where fraud and malice can be proved (and that's easy in today's highly volatile environment), you go to debtors' prison. Sound old-fashioned? In five "get tough" smokestack states, it's state of the art—statecraft. And in prison you pay the high *retail* price for the brand you tried to leave. So now we're beginning to get to something.

CUT TO: INTERIOR OF U.S. CAPITOL —THE ROTUNDA. LET'S HEAR FOOTSTEPS—*ECHO*, *ECHO*, *ECHO*. CREDIBLE NARRATOR STOPS IN FRONT OF STATUARY—DOESN'T MATTER WHO.

CREDIBLE NARRATOR: The people who built this country were doers, not doubters. So if each and every American has to be attached to reliable brand-name products like a child to his mittens, I for one say, "So be it." The Founding Fathers knew about brand loyalty; they just called it by another name—"sacred honor," I think the phrase is.

CUT TO: CREDIBLE NARRATOR SITTING IN SHABBY BLACK LEATHER CHAIR.

CREDIBLE NARRATOR: But that's

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just part of the problem. We've got a huge national debt. Where did it come from? Who's to blame? Fact: We owe on this black leather furniture, and it's not fit to sit in, I can vouch for that (*takes stuffing out of chair, discards stuffing, makes a little face*), and it's likewise true that the state of Illinois isn't completely paid for. Some economists are bankrupt and are living in Small Claims Court. Small claims are harder to find than ever, and large claims have been moved offshore to The Hague, where debts, calculated in guilder, a hard European country or currency, mount up with dizzying speed. Fact: The word "dizzying," itself a Korean word, is employed more and more by hack writers to describe a desperate situation. "Desperate Situation" is now under review by the Mainland Chinese. What went wrong?

CREDIBLE NARRATOR GETS OUT OF BLACK LEATHER CHAIR. DOLLY IN TO SHOW CHAIR—SPRINGS ALL SPRUNG, STUFFING COMING THROUGH, ETC.

Now we may be getting somewhere. Allen bought this furniture because he intended to marry—not right away, or anyone in particular (except no short-haired brunettes); rather, he intended to seek out a wife by using black leather furniture as a kind of dowsing instrument. Love me, love my furniture was his idea. Or vice versa. He met Alēex—five-foot-two short-haired brunette, gash in her scalp, five metal rings up her left ear. Alēex moved in; marriage was a total washout; furniture out on the street—three payments to go. (*Moves to map of Illinois*) Illinois is another story: men and women dancing in the dark. Who knows how much they owe? Every step takes them closer to one precipice or another. Now, maybe, we're getting closer.

CUT TO: NEW YORK IN THE TWENTIES. BATHTUB GIN. TEXAS GUINAN DOES THE HOOTCHY-KOOTCHY. TEXAS TAKES SOME BIG LUG WHO IS GETTING FRESH AND DASHES HIS HEAD AGAINST A WALL. A PICTURE OF "HEROES AND HEROINES FROM SHAKESPEARE—CYMBELINE, KING OF BRITAIN" CRASHES TO THE GROUND.

CREDIBLE NARRATOR: "Love me, love my furniture"—that's a pretty trashy idea. Good for a third-rate power like France, but not good enough for us. Is it too much to suggest that we return to the brands that made this country great? If that means attaching each American by simple surgical procedure to his or her "basket of products," I say the sooner the better.

CLOSEUP OF "CYMBELINE, KING OF BRITAIN."

CUT TO: "BASKET OF PRODUCTS" AND OUT.

"'And someone,' said the Papa Bear, 'has been co-opting my agenda.'"

THE TEEN-AGE NATIONAL DEBT:
3—True Tales of the NIGHT

Through love of black NIGHT, through and by fragrance in the NIGHT, close dancing, bosom to muscled chest, clothed thigh to clothed thigh, teenagers and their descendants have incurred a huge debt. Also, black music is a factor. Black music is defined as: music of the NIGHT; dark, pierced by stars and the moon; the NIGHT of differing lengths according to the inclination of the earth on its axis; of differing degrees of dark—from pitch to almost light.

ORAL HISTORY

Teri—dressed in white slacks, white sandals, hair in stiff rolls over a sharp, small face; abundant hair stiffened; small face naturally meagre; dressed to suggest abundance (this in the style of NIGHT, one of the forms of NIGHT)—told us this:

"I create NIGHT where I walk. Little puffs of air cloud up around me. I have to have an atmosphere of NIGHT, and so I create it. I am weather. I am weather-producing.

"I am a member of the chorus, I know that. Still, where would the big shots be without us? This stiff hair of mine is something I do to honor stars who are no longer popular and who are now wearing their hair a different way. NIGHT is the imitation of success; running from death halfheartedly. In the NIGHT we allow ourselves to be caught; we can be had.

"I want everything around not to be successful or beautiful but to remind me of success and beauty. That is what is unusual about me—I am willing to be constantly reminded of the existence of success and beauty without hav-

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ing either the one or the other."

Sweet Street

Historical background: Until after the close of the Second World War, no domestic "Sweet Street" as such could be said to exist on a national basis. Individual "Sweet Street"s, so called, existed, as they always had, on a local or regional basis, and were linked by various motives-in-common to one another. Certain nodes such as "Broadway" and "Hollywood" existed as model Sweet Streets, both abstractly, as goals-in-common, and physically, as models to copy, but these nodes functioned as pattern books did in promoting a style of building. The essential real inner core of this "pattern book" relationship between the nodes and their facsimiles was the gap, the space between the archetype and the facsimile. In speaking of a "National Sweet Street" before the Second World War, we are speaking metaphorically. A metaphor is not the thing. A map of the American National Sweet Street at this time would show far more discontinuity than continuity: a national highway system made up entirely of entrance and exit ramps from thickly settled areas—wholly unlike the interconnected system of today.

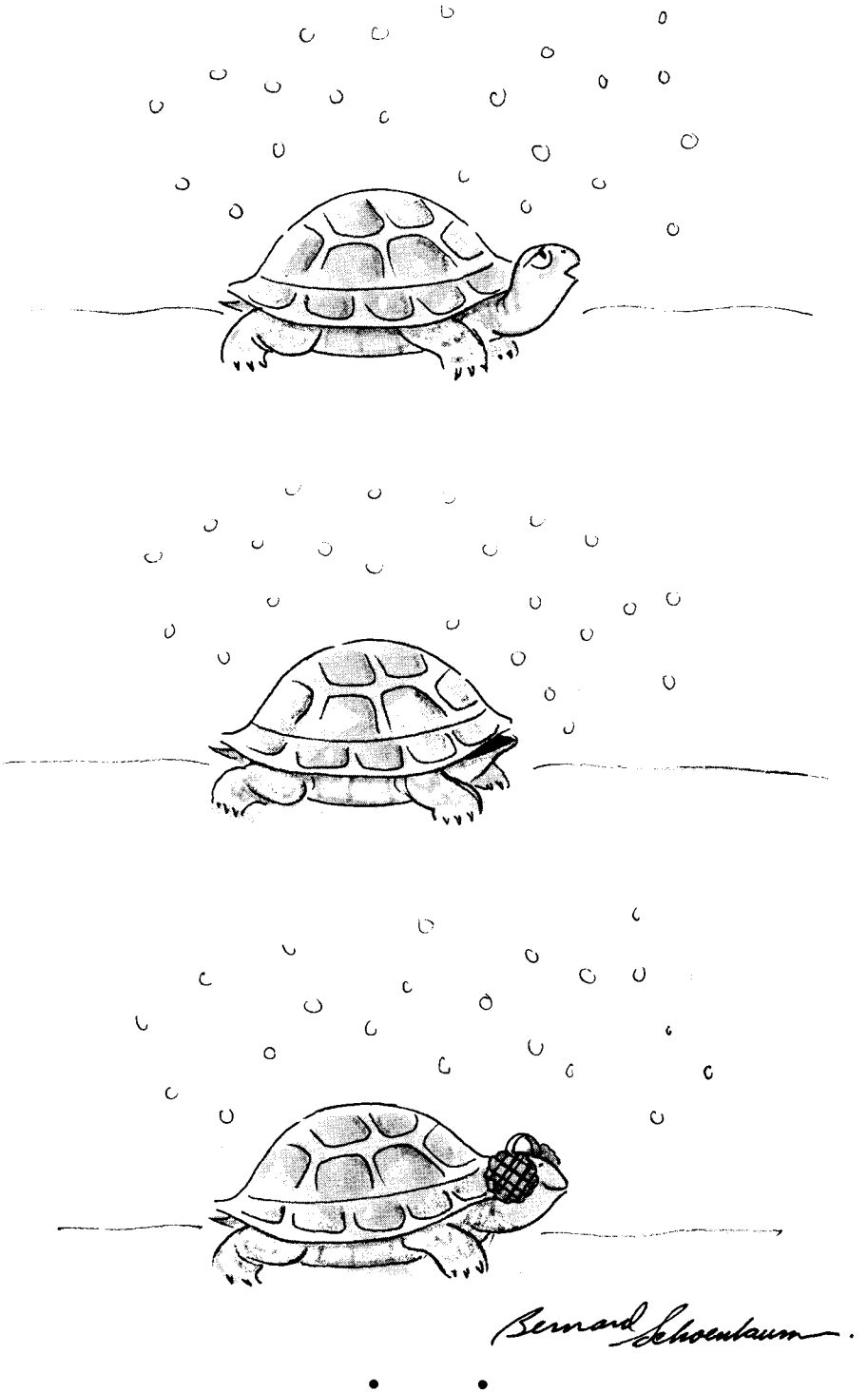
In the bars and lounges of Baltimore just after World War II, they used to sing a song:

Sweet Street,
Oh, chile,
That's where I want to be,
'Cause when I'm down on Sweet Street
My girl looks up to me.

The sky is huge and dark; curved; with wisps of light; after sunset, an electric, vital blue shines for a time. We are standing on a patch of ground; we will stand still, so that the horizon does not advance or retreat but stays constant. Sweet Street will emerge. We see a line of melancholy houses. Now, in the foreground, we see a leg, a bosom, a full white bosom with a man's hand just over it—now upon it. Sally and Earl are enjoying each other. Some sounds are mechanical; "The Gal from Joe's," the Ellington tune, is heard. Sally and Earl get up.

We move out into a hallway and down a flight of stairs.

We go back out into the street. It is Sweet Street! We breathe in the air of early evening and watch the signs come on. We watch Sally and Earl go into Joe's Place. We follow them in. It is empty. See their disappointment. Not quite empty. There is a bartender; when the room is this sad, he has a near-absolute authority. We stay.



Bernard Schoenbaum.

NIGHT Itself

We rise. We float upward through pressure; then we feel as though we have stopped; some process of movement has ended. We are at the moment when a business closes its doors for good, but nothing has physically changed, it might reopen in the morning; that is how it feels. It feels the way a car looks when it has been covered with a protective cloth but its owner has died: there is a sweet soft pall over everything, and a real death, too.

THE TEEN-AGE NATIONAL DEBT:
4—SOCIOLOGY

LONG INTRO: A TOUGH GUY, DRESSED TO THE TEETH, PULLS OUT A SILVER FLASK, TAKES A LONG SWIG. CLOSEUP OF FLASK AND FINGERS. FLASK IS ENGRAVED: "MARAUDER—CHAMPION LIGHTWEIGHT HUNTER, MEADOW BROOK CLUB, 1930." FINGERS ARE STUBBY; HUGE; CALLUSED: KILLER FINGERS.

CUT TO: A MODERN LIVING ROOM: A PUDGY MAN SITTING ON A SOFA. HE IS A KILLER.

PUDGY KILLER: For some jobs you

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need somebody tougher than a reporter; you need a sociologist. Hi, I'm Tim MacEno, author of "Trust, Pattern, and Sexual Stimulation" (Radax Press; 1956), "Stim-U-Town in Transition" (University of Radax Press; 1960), and "Gloria" (Radax Romances; 1982), the story of one teen-ager's impact on the national debt, among others. Let's look at these landmark achievements.

CLOSEUP OF DUST JACKET OF "TRUST, PATTERN, AND SEXUAL STIMULATION": LURID RED CURTAIN DRAPED TOP AND LEFT; TAWDRY BLONDE IN BLACK OFF-THE-SHOULDER EVENING DRESS, IN SHREDS, HOLDING A DAGGER, DROP OF BLOOD AT TIP.

PUDGY KILLER: This is a goddam classic. This should have won big for me at Stockholm, but it was raining. Will to Power, Modern Romances—it's all here in convenient caplet form; but it was raining, so they gave it to Morlowski, who— But I forget what happened to Morlowski. Does anyone remember?

MAKES "DUH" GESTURE—BIG INDEX FINGER RUBBERING AROUND HIS BIG FAT LIPS. CLOSEUP OF THIS. MORLOWSKI, WE REMEMBER, IS DEAD.

CUT TO: DUST JACKET OF "STIM-U-TOWN IN TRANSITION": SKYLINE OF MEDIUM-SIZED CITY AT NIGHTFALL. GIANT LURID RED LIPS HANGING OVER TOWN; LURID PINK TONGUE SNAKING OUT.

PUDGY KILLER: Here's my baby. In the life of any great scholar or athlete there's one day, one round, when you say, "Hey, whatever it is—the applause, the recognition—I'm me, I'm this guy; this is my story." You know the feeling? So that's how I feel about "Stim-U-Town in Transition," the book that gave me my first real break. It's much too important to go into here. Suffice it to say that I got the idea from a little colored boy.

CUT TO: DUST JACKET OF "GLORIA": AGAINST THE SILHOUETTE OF A BIG-CITY HIGH SCHOOL, A YOUNG GIRL STANDS ON A WINDSWEPT MOOR.

PUDGY KILLER: Now, this is where I get really brilliant. The haunting story of a whole postwar generation. Now, to make my point that much more vivid, which Birchall never does, which Frankman never does. With all their so-called brilliance, according to some people, they never do what I'm going to do right now. Gloria, would you mind stepping right in here, sweetie?

ENTER: GLORIA. SHE IS A SHY WOMAN, WITH A TIMID SMILE. SHE IS PREGNANT.

PUDGY KILLER: Now, honey. What do *you* call the *street*?

GLORIA: I call it "The Sweet Street."

PUDGY KILLER: Thank you. Thank you very much. (EXIT GLORIA.) Now I'm going to do something radically different from what all the so-called academics do. I'm going to show a film clip right here. Can we roll? This is very rare footage, very old and unique. This is the kind of thing where, if you're going to stay locked to a desk, the chances are you'll never come into contact with something like this in a million years.

CUT TO: FILM CLIP OF FOUR TEEN-AGE BOYS SINGING A CAPPELLA IN THE I.R.T. CIRCA 1955:

Oh, chile,
That's where I want to be,
'Cause when I'm down on Sweet Street
My girl looks up to me.

PUDGY KILLER: Isn't that great? And that's where I got the idea, see—not from any so-called academic—to develop a *Sweet Street* concept. Could we have the audio? Just the audio?

FOUR TEEN-AGE BOYS SINGING A CAPPELLA (AUDIO ONLY):

Oh, chile,
That's where I want to be,
'Cause when I'm down on Sweet Street
My girl looks up to me.

CUT TO: CAPITOL ROTUNDA. SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS: *ECHO*, *ECHO*, *ECHO*. REVEAL HIGHLY CREDIBLE NARRATOR LOOKING UP AT STATUE OF SOME OLD GUY.

CREDIBLE NARRATOR: Look here at his *feet*. (DOLLY IN.) I admire the workmanship of these fine old statues, and of course the *statesmanship* of (*looks at name on statue*) Carla Schmidt, "Lily of the Ozarks." *Hel*-lo, it's a *gal*. Well, I'm sure she was game, but

"Well, it took her a year, but the little bulldozer landed him."

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"Dinnertime, Webster."

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lookit here, this country was carpeted by movers, not moochers, so if I want to sever this gal's ankle from her marble foot, that's just what . . .

CUT TO: MODERN LIVING ROOM, SUNSET. PUDGY KILLER ON SOFA, AS BEFORE. HIS EYES ARE WIDE OPEN: UNBLINKING. A SMALL ORIENTAL WOMAN SITS UPSTAGE RIGHT WITH A STACK OF CASSETTES. AN AMAZING GOLDEN GLOW INTERPENETRATED BY PINKS, BLUES, PURPLES, AND REDS SUFFUSES THIS EARLY-MODERN LIVING ROOM.

PUDGY KILLER: Well, it's almost over. I'm going to go home and have a really nice dinner, because *I deserve it*. I've learned to overcome my own negativity and focus on my brilliance.

ORIENTAL WOMAN (*holding up cassette*): Tim really lays it all out!

PUDGY KILLER: In a minute, I'm going to explain the whole thing, and *then* I'm going to bring out Gloria again to show how personal romantic inclinations can impact on the balance of payments. But right now let's go to the Oval Office.

CUT TO: THE OVAL OFFICE. THE PRESIDENT SPEAKS TO THE NATION CONCERNING THE TEEN-AGE NATIONAL DEBT.

THE PRESIDENT: Last year, I spoke to you for the first time about NIGHT; fragrant music in the NIGHT; fresh taut bosoms against sincere muscled young men; the crisis facing us. Today, I have instructed my Cabinet and my personal friends to prepare for me a constitutional amendment based on coming up with some sort of way to keep NIGHT where it belongs—after six. This would work on a sliding scale, fair to everyone except bums, by which NIGHT would be restricted to after 6 P.M. in fiscal 1988 and then to after 7 P.M., and so on, until in 1991 there wasn't any NIGHT at all,

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"A lacklustre style got me where I am, and a lacklustre style is going to keep me here."

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nor could there legally be any NIGHT ever again after that. I have also asked the children of my personal friends, and all the personal friends of my children, to report to the Supreme Court. We cannot pass on to the children of my personal friends or to the personal friends of my children any intolerable debt or burden. I have always said that what we are working toward is away from even knowing which children are the personal friends of my children and which are the children of my personal friends, and that's just what we are going to continue to do. Good night, and God bless you.

CUT TO: MODERN LIVING ROOM: ALL APPOINTMENTS HAVE BEEN REPOSSESSED. PUDGY KILLER STANDS NAKED IN NEARLY EMPTY ROOM. SMALL BAR REFRIGERATOR UPSTAGE. ORIENTAL WOMAN WITH CASSETTES, AS BEFORE.

PUDGY KILLER: All of us will be speaking to you personally about our personal experiences, which will be harrowing, I'm sure, but not to be avoided. I paid seven thousand dollars for a Korean bar refrigerator.

ORIENTAL WOMAN: You'll get "Trust, Pattern, and Sexual Stimulation."

PUDGY KILLER: I was a little hung over or maybe *still drunk* when I entered the appliance store.

ORIENTAL WOMAN: You'll get "Stim-U-Town in Transition"!

PUDGY KILLER: There are three main payment "routes," or "payment thruways," by which the refrigerators induce persons to join cults or turn over their Social Security checks. The first is the "Imperial Kingship Plan." This is attractive to slow people, because it involves a very small "startup" payment. In fact, in the most extreme cases the refrigerator company sends money to the refrigerator owner for the first several years of ownership; thereafter, payment levels skyrocket at a dizzying rate. This is depressing, so let's talk about something else. The second "route," or "payment thruway," involves the so-called "free trip to Korea" scam, whereby the buyer is encouraged to pick up his or her bar refrigerator in Seoul. So-called "special accessories" and a "sports package" are part of the appeal. Once in the Korean capital, the buyer is forced to join a "tour," which provides the occasion for payments to the buyer in local currency (for "spending money"), which are then translated into dollar-denominated loans at very unfavorable rates, natch. The third "route," or "payment thruway," involves sexual exploitation and is now in the hands of a receiver.

ORIENTAL WOMAN: Best of all, you'll get "Gloria," which shows how personal romantic inclinations can impact on our balance of payments.

PUDGY KILLER: The "special accessory" turns out to be an ice-tray caddy, and the "sports package" is a stripe.

ORIENTAL WOMAN: Here's how to order.

EPILOGUE

(Spoken by GLORIA)

GLORIA: I felt at the time we were probably doing something against the national interest. I was in high school and behind in my studies. We had old, out-of-date textbooks that painted a rosy picture of Central America, for instance. I was way behind. When we were at his place dancing slow, I felt everything slipping away. It felt so dark; not like the well-illuminated hallways of our school. I was cut off in NIGHT, with no connection: just him. We were dancing. I felt everything slip away, like adults tiptoeing out of the room. I was not surprised to learn the next day that our nation had suffered a trade deficit of a hundred and forty-five billion dollars that month. I feel guilty. I feel responsible. But I don't know if it's realistic for me to try to pay it all back at this point. I can't afford it. I just don't have the money.

—GEORGE W. S. TROW

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BOGOTÁ

JOSEPH is on Calle 47, around the corner from the apartment he shares with Robert and Sue. He is hoping the shoe-repair store will be open. Intentions and reality are somewhat less congruent in Bogotá than in other places Joseph has lived. Suppose a sign says that an establishment's hours are nine to twelve and two to six, Monday through Saturday. One arrives at four-thirty on Thursday and finds the place is closed. On the other hand, it may very well be open Saturday at one. Joseph's black shoes have been at the shoe repairer's for more than two weeks. It is now almost five o'clock on Wednesday afternoon; the Canadian party is Saturday night, and Joseph wants to look his best. He can't wear a jacket and tie with old, beat-up boots. The Saturday before last, the initial promised date of repair completion, the *zapatero*, talking with nails in his mouth, told Joseph to come back Monday. Monday morning, when he looked in on his way to the university, the repair shop was closed. Thursday, the *zapatero* promised the shoes for Saturday—last Saturday, that is. Now it is Wednesday, three days from the Canadian party, and Joseph still does not have his shoes.

Bonita Schulz invited him. Bonita is a nurse Joseph met in Cuernavaca, where they were both learning Spanish. She works in a clinic in Sabanalarga and is the reason Joseph came to Colombia, a year ago. Maybe her mother, in Edmonton, named her after Bonita Granville, but in Latin America the name resonates. Bonita is definitely *bonita*.

During his first year in Colombia, Joseph, an ornithologist of sorts, often went to Sabanalarga. Sabanalarga has white-browed spinetails. It is also between Bucaramanga (silvery-throated and rufous spinetails) and Barranquilla (Azara's spinetail). He could also stop off there en route to the Chocó. Very little was known about spinetails and the Chocó. There could even have been dinosaurs there.

Did Bonita like Joseph? It could have been his tapes. He had this great little Nagra portable recorder for the birdcalls, and all these extra tapes: "The Marriage of Figaro," "Rigoletto," Mozart's last B-Flat-Major Piano Concerto. Bonita didn't listen to those. She listened to "Music from Big Pink," Jethro Tull, "Rubber Soul," and Crosby, Stills, and Nash. Joseph's oldest daughter, Patricia, had sent the tapes to Cuernavaca to help him make friends.

Even though the only Crosbys he knew about were Bing and Bob, Joseph didn't mind this music. Bonita would lie beside him in the Hotel Real in Sincelejo in her underpants and listen to one tape after another.

IT is six months since Joseph has seen Bonita. In Santa Marta, where she had asked him to take her for the weekend, Bonita had to paint his torso for the Seven-Year Itch. He was not allowed to bathe or swim. While Bonita swam, he huddled beneath an umbrella; his boots protected him from the scorching sand. Joseph's Bogotá landlady, Señora Pinzon, cried when Joseph told her that unclean sheets were responsible for his condition and that changing sheets did not mean just moving them from one bed to another. She said there was no one she could trust anymore. That was when Joseph moved in with Robert and Sue. Señora Pinzon's husband had recently married his secretary, in a Venezuelan civil ceremony. All Señora Pinzon's friends were single married women barred by church and state from divorcing husbands now living with secretaries with whom they had exchanged vows in the Maracaibo city hall. Señora Pinzon was large and light on her feet. She took the man's part when she and her friends danced in the parlor to phonograph records. Mornings, Joseph would hear her downstairs singing ballads about passions truncated in gardens she wished she remembered.

The last time Joseph was in Sabanalarga, Bonita spent a lot of time dancing the cumbé with Eduardo. Eduardo, a pharmacist, had long hair and moist eyes. Bonita and Eduardo wiggled their arms and hips, watching each other warily, even stonily, without touching. This reminded Joseph of the mating ritual of cranes. Eduardo was younger than Joseph's son-in-law, Trelawny, but why not? After all, Bonita was younger than Joseph's daughter Patricia. Joseph went back to the Hotel Real alone and fell asleep to "De' miei bollenti spiriti." Sunday, in the Chinese restaurant, Bonita had said she was tired of lying next to him practically naked and nothing happening. "Don't come back," she told him.

THOSE purchasing *bocadillos* on Calle 47 have to push through the line of customers waiting to get into the fried-chicken place next door. The *bocadillo* peddler rattles his spoons like castanets, splinters the tops of hard-boiled eggs with taps of a spoon bottom, sprinkles pepper with the other hand. Pepper mingles with crisp, spicy odors from the broiling racks. Inside the bakery, swarms of women snatch rolls with long aluminum pincers.

The *zapatería* is open.

"Good day, Señor Correa," Joseph says. "I am here for my shoes."

"You have the number?"

This is the third time Joseph has shown him the ticket.

The shoemaker disappears beneath the counter. "I don't see them," he says.

"You promised me they would be ready last Saturday. It is Wednesday."

"*Muy ocupado*."

"They were supposed to be ready two weeks ago."

"You came Saturday?"

"If they were supposed to be ready Saturday, they should be ready today. Today is Wednesday."

"They would have been ready Saturday."

"Listen!" Joseph shouts, waving the tack hammer. "If I don't have my shoes tomorrow, I will throw everything in the street. Understand?"

"What do they need, the shoes?"

"Soles and heels. They are black shoes. I will be back at five tomorrow. I will burn the shop down." Joseph smites the counter with the hammer. He glares down at Señor Alfonso Correa P. and curls his lip.

On the way downtown, Joseph observes taxis—rattling resuscitated '50s Fords, smoking reincarnated '40s Plymouths, and sulfurous Chevy zombies, with canted, wrinkled bodies, rear bumpers that barely clear the pavement, and freakishly exposed wheels—groan and squeal along Carrera Decima, mingling with honking *colectivos* and robin's-egg-blue-and-orange buses, crammed with homeward-bound workers. Free-riding youths cling limpetlike to the backs of the buses, with their arms and legs extended in unlikely directions.

Joseph has three pairs of shoes: tennis sneakers, boots, and the ones with Alfonso Correa P. He doesn't mind

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wearing boots in the Tequendama Hotel. In the bar of the Tequendama, Joseph's friend Irving munches pretzels by the handful. "I gave a muchacho five pesos to watch my car," he says.

"Matching hubcaps can be hard to come by," Joseph says.

Irving's white brocade shirt is open at the collar. A silver-and-turquoise pendant graces his chest. Wiry hairs sprout between buttons. "Maybe I should go outside a minute," he says. "Maybe I can pay somebody to watch the muchacho."

"*Quis custodiet ipsos custodes*?" Joseph says.

Joseph met Irving and Martha at the tennis club. Now Irving wants Joseph to reassure him that he will not be murdered if he asks Martha to share his apartment in the hotel. Martha is separated from her husband, who manufactures dry cells in Medellín. "She says he is living with a Frenchwoman who was over here on a trade mission," Irving says.

"Irving," Joseph says. "You come to a strange country. You don't even know the language."

Irving, a dental surgeon from Morris Plains, New Jersey, specializes in accident cases. He left New York on an Avianca flight with his bearer bonds when his wife, a former Orange Bowl Queen, announced she had consulted a lawyer about a divorce. He has been in Bogotá three weeks.

Irving clips his pen, with which he has been writing the name and address of Dr. Quillones, in the inside breast pocket of his blazer, where he keeps his windshield wipers. He has learned to remove the wiper blades whenever he parks his brand-new silver Porsche. Dr. Quillones strapped Joseph's knee after Joseph dropped down an open storm drain next to the curb at Calle 75. Irving is worried about his blood pressure in this high altitude.

"She's some good-looking woman!" Irving says. "*Mamma mia!*" He is looking around. "She'll be here any minute. If you want a date, Martha's got lots of friends."

JOSEPH is worried about what he can do to the shoe repairer, after having threatened to throw everything in the street and burn the shop down. He prefers that the shoes be ready. He is in the National University's Departamento de Ornitología, listening for variations in spinetail calls—regional dialects. Right now he is listening to a tape of slaty spinetails from Popayán. Spinetails whistle a lot. This is their way of keeping in touch as they creep through grass or underbrush looking for insects.

Padre Patino loves the sound of birds. Except for the Padre and his assistant, Hernando Acevedo, there is no one in the Departamento to disturb. There was an ornithology student last semester, but she switched to economics. Padre Patino, the head of the Departamento de Ornitología, sits in his office behind the glass partition and Hernando makes skins. Every month or so, a professor from another university or a teacher in need of a little extra money drops off dead birds. When he had the Seven-Year Itch, Joseph brought Hernando a cormorant that had washed up on the beach at Santa Marta. He brought it to Bogotá on the Expreso del Sol, packed in salt. He worried that people would notice the smell, which was like drying seaweed's.

"Did not the nurse invite you to the party?" Padre Patino asks now. He has left his desk to stand at the window beside Joseph.

"I am not sure I shall go," Joseph says.

"Is too much escruple. How you say 'scruple'? Over and over in the mind. Too, too bad," Padre Patino says. He is watching a summer tanager eat bees in the courtyard aviary.

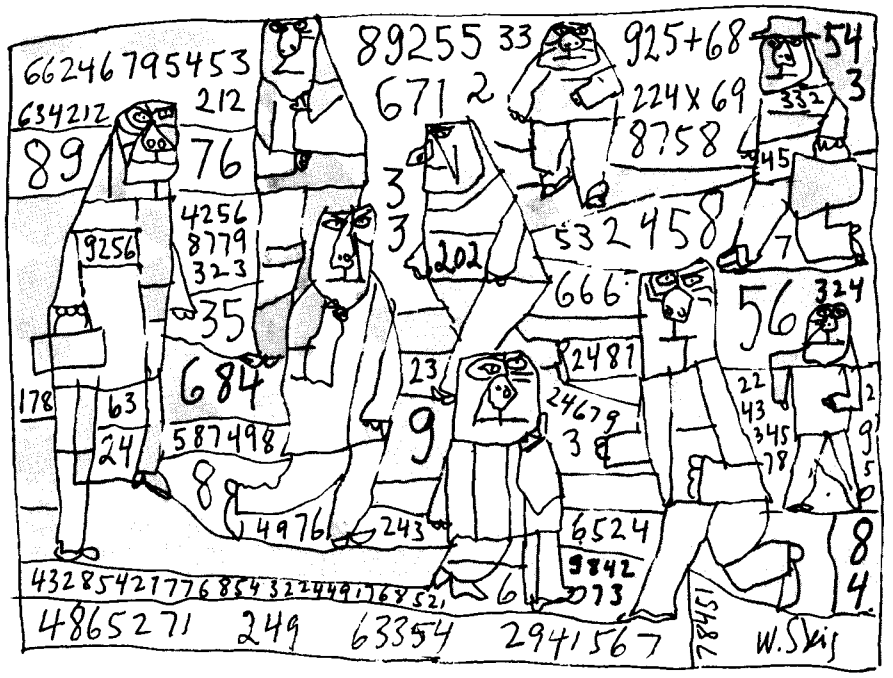
Padre Patino is Joseph's best friend in Colombia. When they go to Fusagasugá together, the Padre identifies birds by sound—even hummingbirds by their peculiar ticking. The Padre can't use binoculars anymore. One of his eyes is nearsighted, the other farsighted. The Padre learned English while attending Georgetown University.

"I'm all right," Joseph says.

"They say if you are celibate you live longer. Do you know this?"

JOSEPH'S black shoes shuffle on the polished floor. Clarissa looks past Joseph's shoulder. She has gray eyes. In the half-light from the open doorway, her long cheeks have a pearly lustre. Clarissa works at the British Embassy. In Phnom Penh, she is telling Joseph, a prince climbed through her window at night. At the edge of Joseph's vision, Bonita wiggles with Frederic, the local head of CUSO, the Canadian Peace Corps. Joseph waves hi. During a record change, while a hat is passed to replenish rum and Coca-Cola supplies (more people showed up than were invited), Joseph hums "Sentimental Journey." He hasn't thought of this song for many years. Clarissa sings the words. Can she be twenty-nine and know the words to "Sentimental Journey"? She also knows the words to "Who." Clarissa looks twenty-nine to Joseph, but he is pleased she is not. He likes the plain arrangement of her bran-colored hair. He finds the part, the white scalp line, unaffectedly endearing. Of course they have no way of knowing that, fifty-three weeks later, they will be married.

—JAMES MUNVES



Business

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PROFILES

CONVERSATIONS WITH KIRSTEIN—II

PEOPLE writing about Lincoln Kirstein's unique role in the arts over the last half century characteristically begin with his founding of *Hound & Horn*, in 1927, during his sophomore year at Harvard, and, a year later, of the Harvard Society for Contemporary Art, a forerunner of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. *Hound & Horn* began as a better-than-commonly-written student quarterly dealing with campus issues, sports, and Ivy League manners. But under the young Kirstein's editorship it attracted contributions of such writers as T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound, and, despite a brief career, of just seven years, it remains historically the rival of *The Dial* and *The Seven Arts* as a distinguished literary journal. And the Society for Contemporary Art was not just another Young Turks' forum but a bridge consciously designed to reach the great world of the arts, philanthropy, and public policy, represented by Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and, more particularly, by her son Nelson, who came to figure prominently in Kirstein's career.

In 1934, four years after Kirstein graduated from college, he and George Balanchine founded the School of American Ballet. In 1948, they founded New York City Ballet. (It was their third company; the first two were American Ballet and Ballet Caravan.) They presided together over these institutions until Balanchine's death, in April of 1983. Today, Kirstein is still the general director of the ballet and president of the school. I first became acquainted with the two men in 1957, when I was director of the Ford Foundation's program in humanities and the arts. (In March of that year, the Ford Foundation had made its first, exploratory commitment to a national program that would support the creative and performing arts.) Over the course of my long friendship with Kirstein, he and I have had conversations every week or so on dance and on the arts in general. He has always pursued many interests outside the dance; he has been critic, connoisseur, art historian, and (in great part anonymously) patron of artists and the arts. In the fall of 1983, he generously consented to record a series of conversations with me. What follows comes from these sessions, which took place over an eight-month period beginning in November, 1983, when Kirstein was seventy-six years old.

LOWRY: I know there were many and quite various influences, both personal and cultural, on your development, but I should like to ask you now when you first became conscious that you had *felt* particular influences in your maturation, what these were, and what the circumstances were of your first becoming conscious of "influence" on your life and development and attitudes.

KIRSTEIN: I suppose the first thing was my father, who was a very remarkable man. He was so much older than I that he could have been my grandfather. He was born in 1867 and had a very vivid memory of Reconstruction. *His* father was a lens grinder in the Bausch & Lomb Company, in Rochester, New York. He had come over from Germany in the wake of the Revolutions of 1848, in the same generation as Carl Schurz. He was a student revolutionary. And although he was Jewish, he had very little contact with Judaism as such, except that he always went to synagogue once a year, on the Day of Atonement. My father didn't want to become a lens grinder. He went into the optical business, and his first job was peddling spectacles all over the Middle West.

LOWRY: From Rochester?

KIRSTEIN: From Rochester. And he fell in love with my mother, who was the daughter of a very well-to-do clothing manufacturer, whose fortune came from providing more or less good uniforms for the Civil War. My mother was brought up in fashionable New York finishing schools, and she was accustomed to middle-class Jewish society in New York and in Europe. In 1911, the family moved from Rochester to Boston. The same year, through an association with an old Scottish firm of optical manufacturers there, Andrew J. Lloyd & Company, my father joined the department store of William Filene's Sons, and by 1914 he was very well off. I think the first artistic impressions or influences on me came through the renovation of our house, on Commonwealth Avenue, which my mother was superintending. It was rather an elaborate establishment, and had belonged to a man called Whitney. He had some very beautiful Empire furniture and some very fine copies of large Venetian pictures, notably Titians and Tintorettos. The house was a big house, and the luxury of the apartments was, I think, more or less indirectly affected by Mrs. Jack Gardner's house [today the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum], as so many rich houses were in Boston at that time. My mother was very much interested in lace and in textiles. She made a collection of lace, and she had a Chinese bedroom that was done in red lacquer—and very remarkably done. My father was less interested in all this aspect of it, but he indulged her. And he was always interested in quality goods—quality shirts, quality clothes—and he was particularly admiring of English workmanship, English craftsmanship, English tailoring. He made a kind of cult of the best suits, shirts, ties, shoes —all those things. And, of course,

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SECRETS

The lights in front of the hospital shine
as though the dark still harbored
secrets, as though there were a star,

invisible, called Heaven,
refracted in the brightly painted planets we hung,
as children, in our garage,

or in the mirrored globes of the double helix
we built with ornaments and wire
and soda straws.

I love to imagine it now,
half fallen among my father's rusting tools,
my mother's wintering geraniums,

like Jacob's ladder, a tower
of Babel, its sprung connection breath
across a bottle when the wind blows

in under the doors.
Some nights, a thousand miles inland, a storm
blowing across the frozen fields,

I'd fall asleep pretending I heard the ocean,
heard the earth's ancient machinery's
creak and roar, the great myths gathering in the air

above the water like flocks pulled star
to star, prophesying,
in their spirals, hands gesturing toward language,

the neurons sparking as the animal
face contorts,
as the eyes burn into the eyes of the listener

and the lips spit, struggle
to form an O.
Now the early life's simple anthem turns

relentless, pleading, trapped
in the high octaves.
Now the egg quickens, sealing itself off, insisting

on its own more difficult
genetic music.
For the child born tonight under the comet's

ice and fire, born
near the century's end as though near the edge
of a continent, it's the dark

of a foreign year.
The air's full of fallout, the air that, transfigured,
becomes the voices of the millions

dead in the minds of the survivors.
It's the song you almost recognize, dreaming
in traffic of the afterlife,

dreaming the merciful past,
the lights by now
so many you hardly see the stars.

—Deborah Digges

• •

it reflected indirectly on the business.

Lowry: Was this house to be the family house for your father and mother?

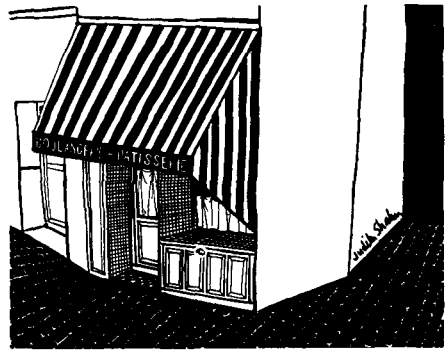
Kirstein: Well, it was for a while. I had an older sister, who was at Smith College, Class of 1918; she had left home. I also had a younger brother, and he and I were brought up there, and we lived there until the end of the war.

Lowry: Going back now: When I asked you about influences, you spoke first of your father. I got some idea of the nature of his interests and focus, but insofar as you felt the influence on you how did you translate that as a young boy?

Kirstein: Well, first of all, it was a question of history. The house was filled with objects of historical resonance; nothing was firsthand. There were some very good electrotypes of Greek bronzes, for example, that Mr. Whitney had in the house. There was some very beautiful Italian furniture apart from the paintings. The paintings had extremely beautiful frames, and everything, in a certain way, was secondhand. But history was very important. My father read to us at night out of American history and English history. He attended the coronations of both Edward VII and George V, and we had the big coronation supplements of the *Illustrated London News*. They were very influential in the formation of our interests.

Lowry: So you had thought about tradition and ritual and arrangements, and all that, ever since hearing your father talk about the coronation of Edward VII?

Kirstein: That's right. My father was very actively engaged in the First World War. He had been overseas, not in the Army but supervising distribution of Army supplies. And he was a great admirer of Woodrow Wilson. I think the first memory I ever had of anybody or anything that was active was when my nurse said, "Go across the street and tell your aunt that a man called Woodrow Wilson has been elected President." And then I remember very well also the second occasion, the reëlection of Wilson over Hughes, when Hughes was declared the winner and the next morning it turned out that Wilson was President. And I remember very well in Boston —he landed in Boston when he returned from Europe, and I remember that figure of a very gray, strange, doomed man coming back to face the Congress. All these things were extremely vivid to me, owing to my father's appreciation of current history. My father became a rather important citizen of Boston. He was the president of the Boston Public Library for many years, and he was the head of the Jewish community, and he was asked to run for governor of Massachusetts —which he refused to do, only on the basis that he would serve but he wouldn't run.



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"Fifty-ninth Street, Columbus Circle. Change for the B, D, and uptown express. Step lively, watch the closing doors, and once the train is in motion start singing 'Good King Wenceslas.'"

• •

LOWRY: He wouldn't campaign?

KIRSTEIN: He wouldn't campaign. He was also very influential in the founding of the Harvard Business School.

LOWRY: When you were a young boy, your father's businesses were extremely active and complex, I'm sure. Did you feel his regular presence around, or was he often gone for long periods?

KIRSTEIN: I was sent away to school when I was quite young. I was sent to prep school when I was eleven years old, and I never saw much of my father. He was never very real to me except as a kind of voice. He was extremely supportive in all the early days of the ballet; he let me do what I wanted. He said that there were two kinds of energy: the energy to establish something and the energy to maintain it. And he didn't expect me to have any interest in the business as such. Generally speaking, he was an extremely wise and tolerant man, although I never knew him very well, and on any intimate basis I had no connection with him.

LOWRY: Was there a time when you began to say, "Well, look, I'm Lincoln Kirstein, my identity, even though I'm very young, is this," and you became conscious of particular influences that made it that way, your father being one of these?

KIRSTEIN: There was another man who was very influential in my life. When I was about nine or ten, I was sent away to camp. It was a camp that was originally founded near Sebago Lake, in Maine, by Luther Halsey Gulick, who was a very remarkable educator. His son-in-law was a man named A. E. Hamilton. And Hamilton ran a big camp called Wohiloh and a small one called Timanous, and that was for boys, and that's where I was. Hamilton was a very interesting man who had been brought up in Mexico. The first book that I ever remember that I liked or that I was influenced by was a book by a Thomas A. Janvier. It was about Mexico and about the Aztecs—Aztec civilization. And this seemed to me very remarkable, because it had nothing to do with American history, nothing to do with European history.

LOWRY: And was it Hamilton who called your attention to the book?

KIRSTEIN: Yes. And I wanted very much to go to Mexico with him. It didn't work out. But he had a friend who was a pupil of Isadora Duncan's, and the first person dancing I ever saw was this girl, who taught dancing at the camp. It was actually free movement, and that was the first time I ever imagined anything like that.

LOWRY: Did you take any dance classes?

KIRSTEIN: Yes, I did. I was in the little class that she had.

LOWRY: Boys and girls?

KIRSTEIN: Only boys. There were several counsellors there of whom I was very fond—there was a very interesting young man named Karl Nickerson Llewellyn, who was preparing for a law degree at Colum-

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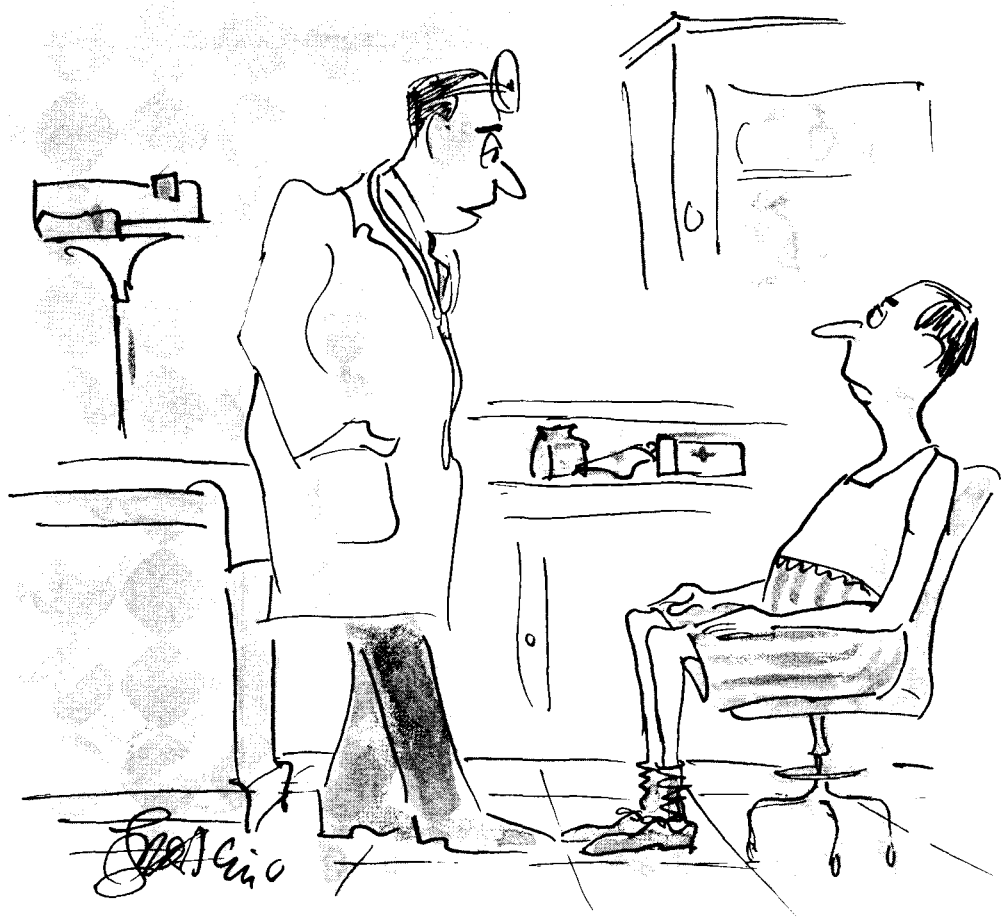

"I'm afraid that novel in you will have to come out."

• •

bia. And he was generally supposed to be a German spy, because his first name was Karl.

LOWRY: Sometimes it seems one goes through life and there's a particular impression both of one's father and of one's relations with the father. Later, looking back, one sees: Well, it was perhaps like *this*. Maybe there's an image or an interpretation or a feeling of one's relations with one's father which changes during one's life. Maybe not. In your case, do you think it did? Do you think your impressions now or ten years ago or twenty years ago of your father's influence and your relations with him were different from when you were a boy?

KIRSTEIN: It never changed very much.

LOWRY: What about with your mother?

KIRSTEIN: She was much more actively interested in things artistic. She let me go to the opera. The Chicago Opera Company used to come every year to Boston, and the Boston Opera House was founded by a man called Eben Jordan, who was the head of Jordan Marsh, which was the rival of Filene's. And whenever I wanted to see anything or do anything she let me. From about 1915 on, every Christmas we came down to New York for two weeks, and we went to the theatre every night and every matinée for those two weeks.

LOWRY: How did your mother occupy herself after you and your sister and your brother were grown or were growing up away from home?

KIRSTEIN: I don't think she had a very happy life, actually. I think she was fond of my father and I think he was fond of her, but I think there was a real split. I was much closer to my mother than I was to my father, and I think my sister was much closer to my father. And I think that my brother, too, was much closer to my father. I think I was a kind of mother's boy.

LOWRY: And you had some common interests?

KIRSTEIN: We had the common interest of art and her respect for it; I don't think she knew anything much, but she had enormous respect for it.

LOWRY: What was the character of your boyhood reading experiences—your preferences, your emergent taste in literature and history?

KIRSTEIN: Well, my father determined that, more or less, because what he read us was primarily Mark Twain at the beginning. He went through Mark Twain very, very thoroughly. And we read a lot not only of "Tom Sawyer" and "Huckleberry Finn" but "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court," and the stories like "Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven" and "Those Extraordinary Twins," "Pudd'nhead Wilson." My father liked Mark Twain very much indeed. Then, there was also a series of books about Abraham Lincoln—particularly Lord Charnwood's "Lincoln," Beveridge's "Lincoln," Barton's "Lincoln"—and they were continually restudied. He was particularly impressed with Herndon's "Lincoln," which he felt was the essential portrait of Abraham Lincoln, and from that I got an idea of history not as written but as experienced.

LOWRY: Were there ever any historical figures in your own sense of the past, or historical or semi-legendary characters, who came anywhere near rivalling Lincoln?

KIRSTEIN: Well, my father proposed Disraeli, for rather obvious reasons. But the first person that ever made any impression on me was Colonel T. E. Lawrence.

LOWRY: And that was not when you were very young?

KIRSTEIN: No. I was about twenty, I guess, when I became very much interested in him.

LOWRY: But as a boy, besides Twain and all the reading about Lincoln, you read, you have mentioned, a book on travels in Mexico. But are there other things in that landscape?

KIRSTEIN: Well, there was a book which was very influential for me, which was purely accidental; it's completely and totally forgotten, called "The Journal of a Disappointed

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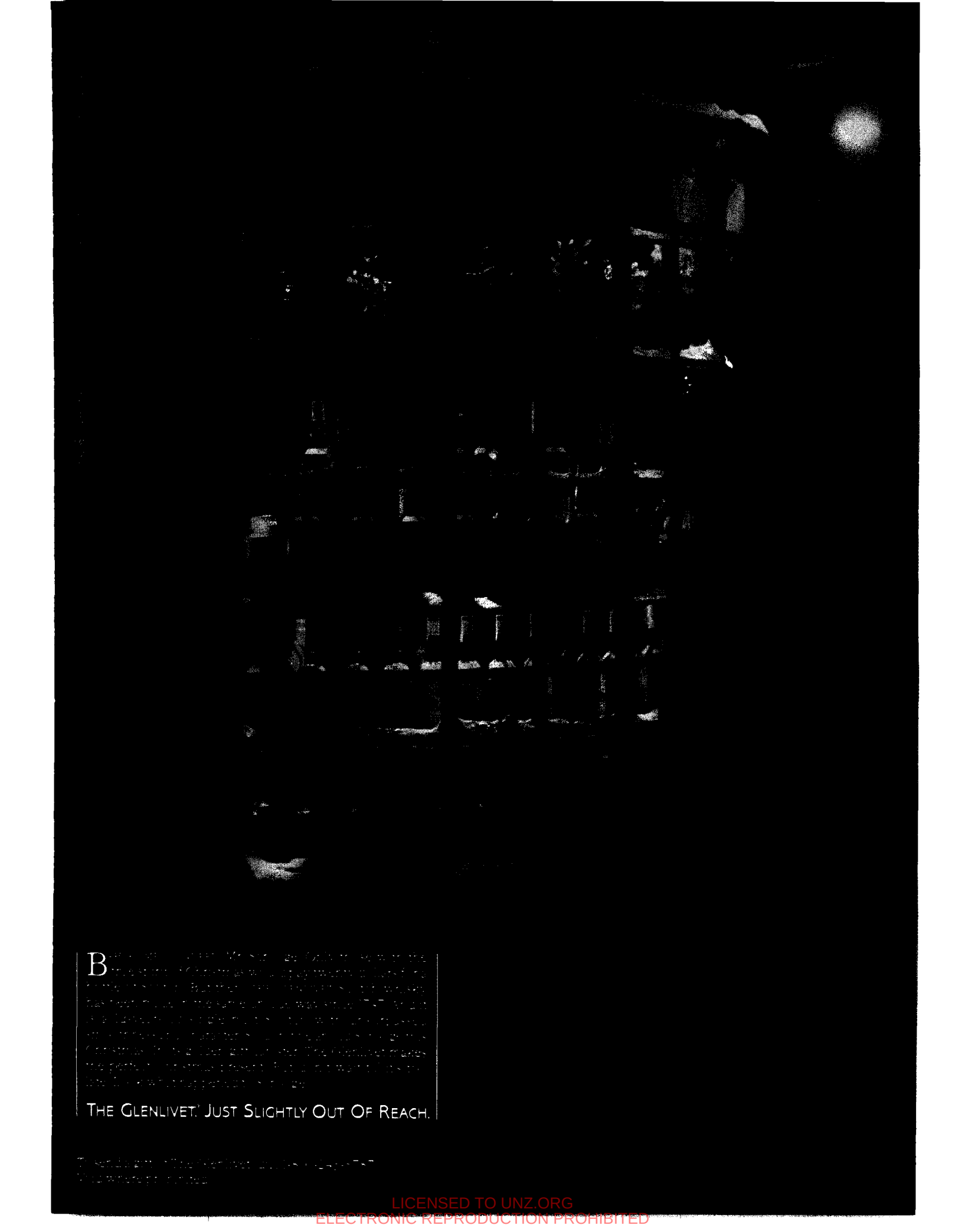

B

THE GLENLIVET. JUST SLIGHTLY OUT OF REACH.

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Man," by a man called W. N. P. Barbellion, with an introduction by H. G. Wells. Barbellion was a naturalist.

LOWRY: An English naturalist?

KIRSTEIN: An English naturalist, and he left three books. His name wasn't Barbellion; it was something quite different [B. F. Cummings]. But the study of nature I thought was very, very fascinating, and it interested me enormously. He died young. And for some reason this book became a kind of Bible.

LOWRY: And how old were you then?

KIRSTEIN: I must have been thirteen or fourteen.

LOWRY: Later, when you were a young man, were there whole interests or categories that you just discarded? Was there a shift?

KIRSTEIN: Well, I felt that I was an idiot about science, for example, and about money. I barely got into college. I failed three times the College Board Examinations in geometry, and the only reason I got in was that I memorized the first five books of Euclid. I always read children's books about science and I am very much interested in it but could never appreciate it. And I have no idea about money. I mean, I don't understand what money is; I've never understood it except how to get it and how to use it. But what it *is* I don't understand. And then, very early on, I had a kind of contempt for politics as such.

"They call me the king of railroad salvage—
'they' being my wife, actually."

• •

LOWRY: Early?

KIRSTEIN: Very early. I never felt that anybody who could get elected was worth anything, because I didn't see why he would not be more interested in something else than in the compromises he had to go through to be in that political situation.

LOWRY: And you would have thought that somebody like Wilson was, by accident, subject to fewer compromises to get there?

KIRSTEIN: I felt that Wilson was a sport: he was a college president, and he became President more or less by accident. But then I was continually reinforced in my contempt by somebody like Harding. My father brought up Harding as the lowest common denominator that you could get, and his attitude about the American Presidency was very influential. There were four or five Presidents he felt were people in their own situation, for the first forty years of the republic—men who by determination and conviction became President. After that, there was a manipulation of party politics. He was very much interested in Andrew Johnson and the fate of Johnson in relation to the revenge of the Reconstructionists, and he thought this would happen to anybody who had a conviction. He was also very powerfully attracted to and admiring of Franklin Roosevelt.

LOWRY: In your case, when you were a boy, Lincoln as President would have been perhaps only another sport, or was there more in your imagination about Lincoln as a politician?

KIRSTEIN: I never thought of him as a politician until much later on. The political aspects of Lincoln were much less important than the magical aspects of a kind of hero or saint or martyr.

LOWRY: He was destined to be President?

KIRSTEIN: He was destined to be President; he was not like the others. My father would tell me, for instance, the circumstances of the Chicago Convention—how it happened that he became President in the first place, and how he became known as a frontier politician purely from having defended the Illinois Central Railroad. The winning of that case and the enormous amount of money he demanded for his fee convinced the Eastern politicians that what he was really interested in was money, and that he could be bought. And that's why he was nominated.

LOWRY: Is there any similar pattern or progression in your visual or artistic interests or tastes outside of literature and history? You mentioned the introduction to interpretative dance at the camp, but in regard to painting or sculpture or any of those things when

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you were a boy, was there a progression?

KIRSTEIN: Well, yes. There was my mother, for example. There was the influence always of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and of the Gardner collection and of the Fogg Museum. Boston was very much filled with objects that I looked at and liked in one way or another. I had a considerable amount of interest in and information about painting and sculpture, and even architecture, before I went to Harvard. And there were certain things that were very important to me, like the Boston Public Library. My father having been president of the library, I was there all the time. There were the murals of Puvis de Chavannes and of Edwin Austin Abbey, and the building itself by Stanford White, and opposite was Henry Hobson Richardson's Trinity Church, and these things were very important to me.

LOWRY: Starting how early?

KIRSTEIN: I must have been nine or ten, I suppose. Then, later on, naturally, this was all logically systematized by Harvard and the Fogg Museum.

LOWRY: But sticking with when you were a boy and growing up through adolescence, and so on: I've never known, even among professional curators, a more inveterate museum visitor than you, wherever you are, in the United States or abroad.

KIRSTEIN: Well, I think my mother started that when we first went to Paris. I'd already been to the Museum of Fine Arts, but when we went to Paris for the first time, in 1922, it was a question of the Louvre, the Carnavalet, Cluny, Versailles. All those historic monuments were magical and they interested me very much. I don't know—I more or less absorbed the idea of them, and then, later on, when I went to Harvard, I was very well instructed. There was a man who was extremely influential: Martin Mower, who was a teacher and a painter. He was a very good painter. He had no originality, but he was a wonderful technician. He was a friend of Mrs. Jack Gardner and painted pictures for her which are in her museum, and he was the first person I knew whom I wanted to paint a portrait of me.

LOWRY: How old were you?

KIRSTEIN: I guess I was about seventeen or eighteen. At the same time, I was very much interested in self-portraiture. It was not a question, exactly, of narcissism; it was a question of finding out how artists work. All my life, I've been interested in portraiture. I'm interested in the technique of portraiture, and I have a lot of self-portraits by varieties of people. I feel that I know how they work through having observed them.

LOWRY: Did your mother have this interest in portraiture?

KIRSTEIN: Yes, she did in a way. I have portraits of my great-grandfather and great-grandmother. I have portraits of my grandfather and grandmother, and my mother never had a portrait painted but she had miniatures done of all her children from the time they were born.

LOWRY: And your father?

KIRSTEIN: He had no interest in it, but he was interested in photography. There was a man named Pirie MacDonald, a Scotsman in New York; he was sort of the "Karsh of Ottawa" of his time. And he did a series of portraits of my father—and of me, as a matter of fact, from the time I was about ten.

LOWRY: It's just coincidental, but novelists, American or British, writing of this same period when you were growing up, some of them, like James or Wharton, were always using museums and objects in museums as places for accidental encounters of people or for the purchase of a painting, the auction, the borrowing of money on a painting, you know—as in "The Golden Bowl." Was your boyhood and youth in all these museums and monuments a loner's occupation? Did you speculate about or meet or discover people?

KIRSTEIN: You couldn't help it. There were people in Boston whom I was in contact with who had great collections. But I never particularly wanted to own anything. The first things I bought were out of the John Quinn sale in New York, in 1927. [Quinn was a New York attorney and modern-art collector.] These were things I liked: there were some African sculptures; there was a painting by the Irish poet and artist Æ [George William Russell]. But although I never wanted for anything, I never had any money to spend on anything.

LOWRY: When you went to museums routinely, it was alone?

KIRSTEIN: Well, I was curious about objects. The Boston Museum was a very remarkable place. This is extremely complicated: There was a man named Denman Ross, who taught at Harvard, a very, very good painter, and he had a thing about—what do you call it—"dynamic symmetry." He was an academic painter but a very interesting one. And when I went to Harvard I started painting seriously, and I thought I wanted to be a portrait painter. And I was rather encouraged, because I had a certain amount of facility for getting a likeness. And I collected photographs—the photographs of things I liked particularly—and I realized very soon that I could never compete with the quality of the photographs, so I gave up the idea of wanting to be a painter. But objects of art have always fascinated me.

LOWRY: Were the museums in this period in any sense a second home, as they are to you now when you're going around? I remember in Salt Lake City last year you had only two or three hours; you tried to get into a museum. I know you do this.

KIRSTEIN: I'm interested in two things about museums. I'm interested very much in the objects themselves, and I'm interested in how they were collected. I'm interested in taste. I'm interested in the resettlings of various collections; I mean, I'm interested in how rehangings have been done. In the Metropolitan, the transpositions over the last twenty-five years are very interesting to me. When I first went to the Metropolitan, there was an enormous demonstration of Rodin, and this was all removed. Then there were casts of Michelangelo—very fine casts. They've all been removed. And the question of taste and the question of absolute value and what is negotiable and what is popular all interested me. And that's why I have very little interest in talking about art—simply because the people I talk to I never feel are qualified to have looked at anything except the current thing.

LOWRY: But when you were at Harvard this was not true, because there were plenty of people who were qualified . . .

KIRSTEIN: They were qualified in a certain sense. Harvard at that particu-

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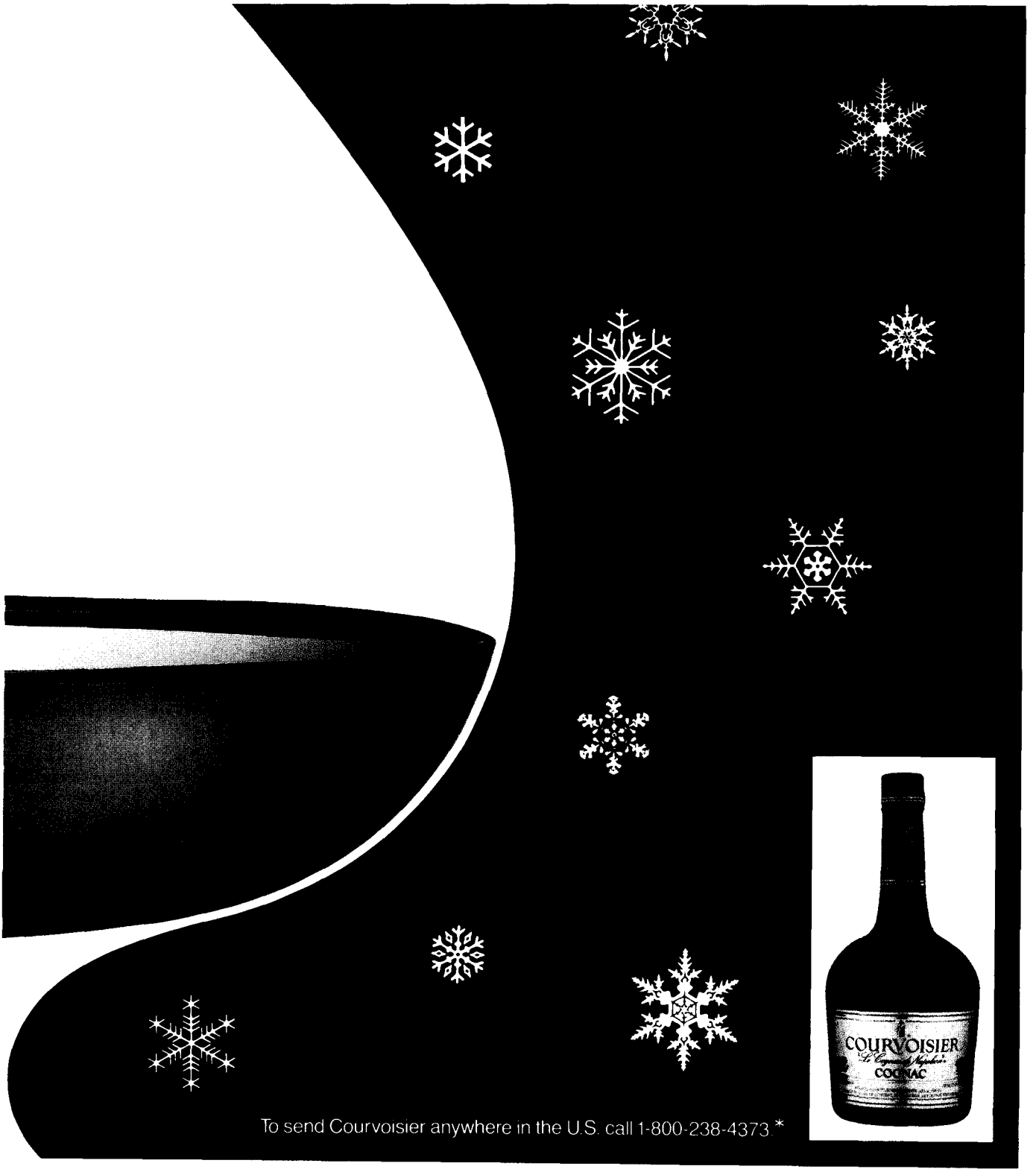

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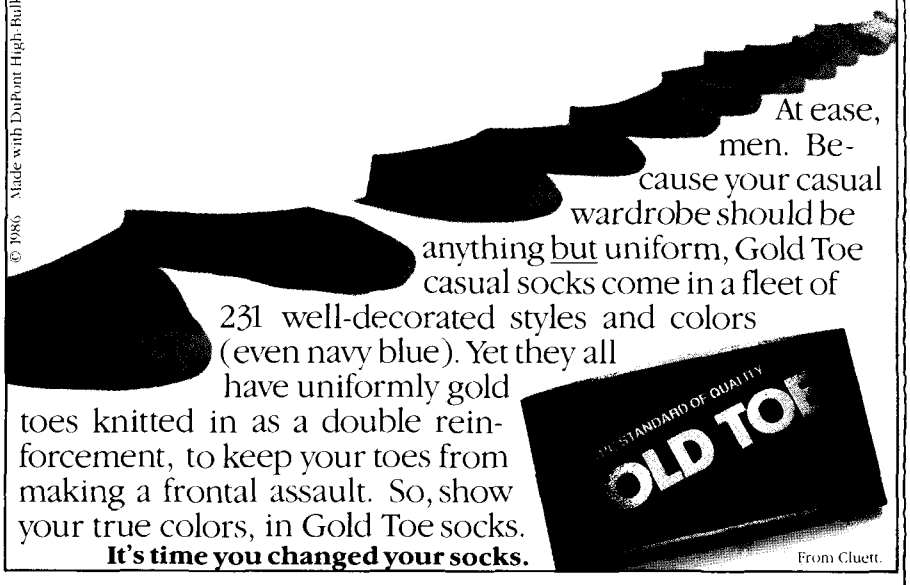

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lar time was very much under the influence, as far as taste goes, of three men. One was Kingsley Porter, who was a great specialist in the Romanesque, and another was Leonard Opdycke, who knew a great deal about the Baroque, particularly in France. And there was a man named Langdon Warner, a very interesting and influential man, who, single-handed, I think, persuaded the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the Second World War not to bomb the center of Japan, so that Nara and Kyoto were saved, really, by this man from Harvard. He was a cousin by marriage of President Franklin Roosevelt.

LOWRY: In this fix on history and tradition that one sees so plainly in your life, did it include also an idea of the place of your generation? That is, of the constant flow *to* your generation and the relations between your generation and all these things?

KIRSTEIN: I don't think so. The first people I ever had as friends at Harvard had absolutely nothing to do with art and no interest in culture, no interest in ideas. They were admired purely for their physical endowment, for their looks, for their families; because they were all very old New England families who had meant for me the embodiment of a tradition. They had no interest in anything except the immediate situation. I felt that they were historical objects; and they fascinated me, because they behaved exactly as their parents and grandfathers behaved. The Harvard I went to from 1926 to 1930 I felt was always in the nineteenth century. It had nothing to do with the present. They had no interest in the present, they had no interest in anything I had to do with, and, in a certain sense, it was a relief for me not to worry about it. I was in Harvard the last time it was a college. After that, Edward Harkness came over and endowed the houses, which were an imitation of the system at Oxford.

LOWRY: These young men who were to you historical representatives of their families and of their tradition —this is itself a kind of fictive and creative interpretation of the past and of families?

KIRSTEIN: Well, they were naturally personified. There were three or four people that I knew who were actually heirs of great reputations. I lived with a boy, Francis Cabot Lowell, who personified to me everything that you could possibly imagine in an

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aristocrat. He was the nephew of the president of Harvard, he became a great doctor, but when I knew him he was merely an extraordinary boy who was unconsciously personifying the very best of New England. And he reminded me of the Abolitionists and the people who had inherited wealth but who were extremely responsible.

LOWRY: What you mean, I take it, is that he could grow up in Boston without consciousness of his family traditions, but you couldn't?

KIRSTEIN: I was always amazed at how, without any kind of vanity, he behaved in the most extraordinarily correct manner; his considerateness was fantastic. He had no prejudices of any sort. He had no curiosity. He knew what he would do. He had no doubts. He was the least neurotic person I ever met, and he gave you the feeling that if everybody had as much money as he had and the kind of background he had there would be no trouble.

LOWRY: He had a kind of patrician attitude.

KIRSTEIN: There were three other people who were very influential. There was John Brooks Wheelwright, who was an architecture critic and a poet. His father was the last civic architect of Boston; he designed the great bridge across the Charles, the first subway stations, a number of big monuments. Jack was brought up in Florence. He was rather like John Singer Sargent, and he was an extremely eccentric character. He was a high Anglican; he was also a passionate Trotskyite. He was in the high ranks of Boston society. He was a direct descendant of the Puritans of the seventeenth century. He more or less adopted me, and he was a kind of devil's advocate. He was a very knowledgeable architecture critic, and he objected violently to the Lincoln Memorial. He said that it was a temple placed on a perfectly dreadful podium, and the image of Lincoln should be lit at the far end rather than at the middle of two empty spaces, so that Lincoln would not appear like a jack-in-the-box. He would have very careful analyses of new buildings in Boston he didn't like, like the addition to the Museum of Fine Arts. He gave me a violent contrast to the received ideas that I would get from the Fogg Museum. He would make me question everything; I was horrified at the beginning, because I felt that it was not only perverse but it was sort of dangerous. He was a wonderful man, and

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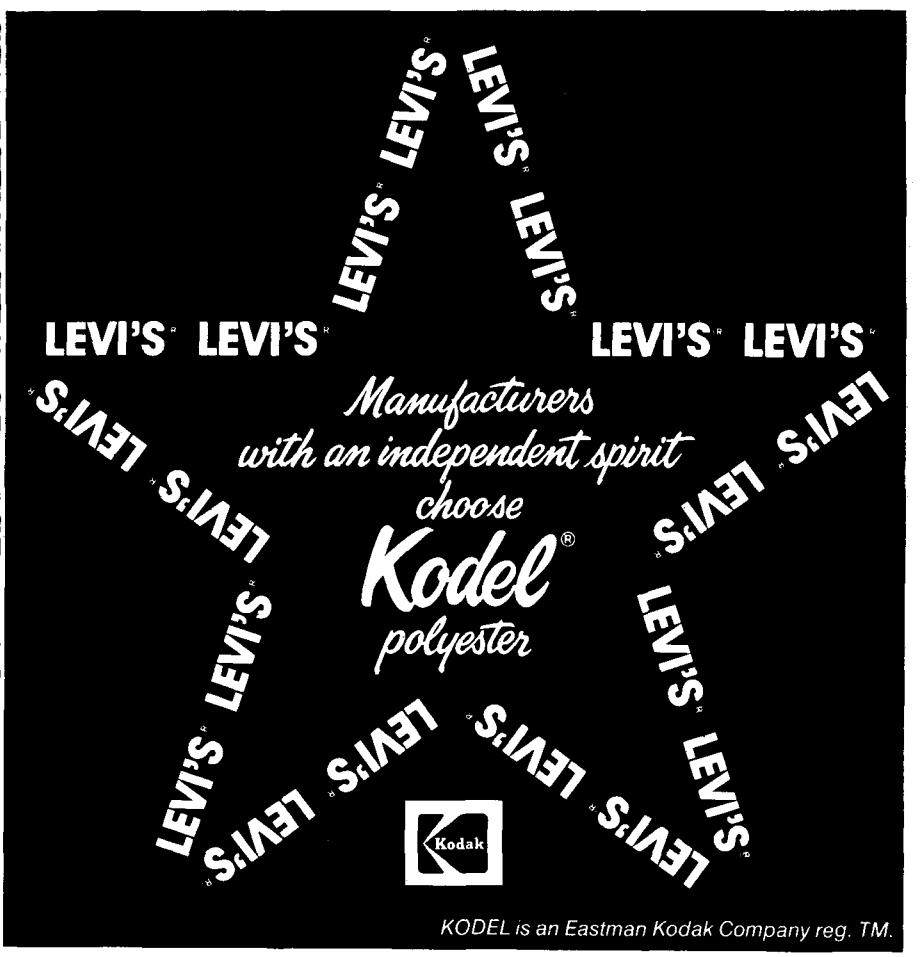

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he was a very interesting poet as well. He was run down in Boston by a drunken driver when he was forty-two years of age.

LOWRY: When you started to talk about him, you said there were two others.

KIRSTEIN: One was a tutor I had at Harvard, S. Foster Damon, who was perhaps the first person who analyzed the structure of William Blake's thought. In 1927, he published a remarkable book, "Astrolabe: Infinitudes and Hypocrisies." The other was a man named Edward Motley Pickman, a descendant of the historian John Lothrop Motley. And he married Hester Chanler, a niece of Julia Ward Howe and a granddaughter of Francis Marion Crawford. Hester's brother Teddy was a musician and was a great friend of mine. They had a beautiful house on Beacon Hill. I thought it was the most beautiful house in Boston, and the most cultivated. And they were friends of the Stravinskys, and they had a wonderful life in the country. She was a linguist; she made beautiful translations of Rilke, for example. Pickman was a great medievalist, wonderfully educated, an agnostic theologian who wrote a very remarkable book about Aquinas. When Pickman was president of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, he gave the commission to Stravinsky for the "Symphony of Psalms" on the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the orchestra. I had all sorts of precedents for what I wanted to do.

LOWRY: You had all sorts of precedents for what you wanted to do—that's exactly what I've been trying to get to. These are the interests you wanted to follow, these are the things you wanted to do—is that what you mean?

KIRSTEIN: Well, I wanted to figure in this line, I wanted to be . . . I don't know, I identified myself with this particular kind of life.

LOWRY: Yes. How early?

KIRSTEIN: Oh, I suppose when I went to Harvard.

LOWRY: I want to come later to some of those things that are so constantly written about, which you've written a good deal about yourself—specific activities at Harvard. Over our long association, one or the other of us has had frequent occasion to point to the opening two or three sentences of "The Education of Henry Adams"—how he couldn't have been different from what he was, the brand of Adams that he was.

KIRSTEIN: Well, it was a dynastic thing. I had no dynasty; I had no family. I mean, Adams was doomed or cursed or blessed with the fact of his grandfather, his father, and the Presidency of the United States, and he was expected to be President of the United States. My father gave me the idea that anything was possible—I mean that nothing was possible for him but *anything* could be possible for me. And I never had any let or hindrance about anything. He let me do exactly as I pleased—which was very remarkable. You could say that he had no understanding of what I was trying to do, but as a matter of fact he did. I think he understood very well what I was trying to do. And he never pressed me; he let me do anything I wanted. He had worries about the *fact* of money—that I wouldn't earn any money, and he didn't know what he could leave me. But apart from that, and assuming that I was a financial idiot, I could do anything that I could get myself to do.

LOWRY: So you had the wherewithal—you had what that brought?

KIRSTEIN: He let me travel. That was the most important thing—he gave me enough money so that I could travel. And I saw a good deal of Europe before I was twenty. I did a lot of serious touristing. For example, my senior dissertation at Harvard was on El Greco. There was a painting that was lost which I tried to find, and I went all over Spain, practically to every place that he might have gone. The picture itself that I was looking for was in Worcester, Massachusetts, about thirty minutes from Boston.

LOWRY: There are many ways in which young boys or young men may feel marked out for the future, feel different from others, destined to seek particular experiences or follow a particular vocation. This is, of course, a truism. But, in your own case, when did you first feel these things? I don't mean the *interests;* you answered that—you said at least by the time you went to Harvard. But as to the beginning of the feeling that that was what you wanted to do—you wanted to be part of it all.

KIRSTEIN: I don't know. It took a long time. I wanted to do a lot of things; I had all sorts of ideas. I wanted to be a portrait painter, I wanted to be a novelist, I wanted to be a professional horseman, I wanted to be a diplomat. I thought I wanted to be lots of things. I wanted to *do* lots of things; I had no idea what I wanted to *be*. That took a long time. And it was a gradual process of shedding off incapacities. I thought I could do anything, practically. I mean, I was always told I could do anything. And the only things I couldn't do were things I didn't want to do.

LOWRY: You were told this not only by your father . . .

KIRSTEIN: Oh, I felt it. I wasn't told it—but I mean I felt it.

LOWRY: And you feel that your mother thought you could?

KIRSTEIN: Oh, yes, I think so. I mean, she invited me to do anything I wanted to do.

LOWRY: And, of course, all those tutors and professors felt that way?

KIRSTEIN: Well, I don't think they did, apart from Martin Mower, who was my teacher in painting and who told me I could never be a painter. I never had any particular facility in any academic study. I was never very noticeable in any field. I was interested, but I had no particular expertness. I just had curiosity and energy, that's all.

LOWRY: All the influences taken together, though, were giving you a very broad and comprehensive education that was in some fields or areas quite detailed.

KIRSTEIN: Yes. I mean, I presupposed that I was qualified to talk to people. I never had any doubt about my own opinions. They may have been wrong, but by the time I was twenty-two or twenty-three I had pretty broad information about objects and the position of objects, the quality of objects. I think that my tastes never changed very much. I think I knew then as much as I know now about the relative standards. I had a very strict discipline from Martin Mower about objects and about the permanence of objects and the responsibility of artists for their permanence, and about method, and about what it takes to be an artist, and particularly a certain kind of artist—that is, a traditional artist. This gave me an enormous re-

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spect for academic painting and academic architecture.

LOWRY: After you left Harvard, did you maintain a relationship with Martin Mower?

KIRSTEIN: No.

LOWRY: You were not friends?

KIRSTEIN: No. I had a very strange feeling—I had a violent revulsion against Harvard. When I came to New York, I never went back. I had no friends, I cut off even the people I was fond of. I wanted to make an absolute clean break. I felt that I didn't know anything and hadn't been taught anything at Harvard, and I wanted to educate myself in New York. And I felt that I was class-bound, and that I had no contact with real people, and the people I saw were highly artificial and mindless, generally speaking, except for my teachers. I cut myself off from all the boys I liked, and it was very capricious in a sense, and rather cruel. A lot of people felt that I behaved very badly, but it was a conscious choice. I wanted to repudiate Harvard, I wanted to repudiate Boston. I wanted to make myself a New Yorker, or much more a sort of cosmopolitan.

LOWRY: Did this cutting off with some cruelty attached affect the people who had collaborated with you either on *Hound & Horn* or on the Society for Contemporary Art?

KIRSTEIN: Well, I killed all that. I wanted to kill all that.

LOWRY: I know, but did you also cut those people off?

KIRSTEIN: Yes. Generally speaking, I did.

LOWRY: Can we talk about your motives and impulses in establishing *Hound & Horn*?

KIRSTEIN: Well, that was a passport to the big world. I mean, it started out by being a traditional Harvard paper, interested in historicity, interested in the situation of Harvard as much as possible. We published articles about football. And then, very quickly, we pushed into the big world, and it was actually Eliot's help that did all that. Eliot more or less backed us and helped us, as did Ezra Pound.

LOWRY: Vouched for you?

KIRSTEIN: Well, contributed to the magazine—which did a lot. And so did Pound. And we were very knowledgeable about all those ideas at the time, and the paper went on for seven years. And it did provide a passport. I took Eliot the preview of the first number we published, and he was ex-

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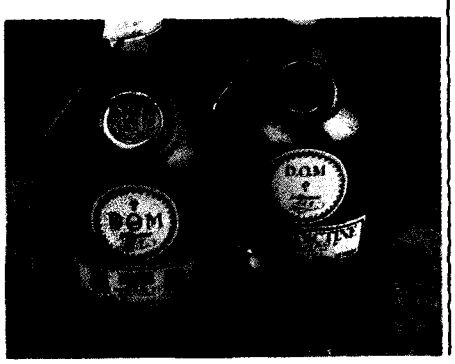

tremely kind to me. Through him I got into London, more or less, although I'd known some people there before. It made me feel that I could do anything I wanted, since it was rather easy. It wasn't any fight. I never had any fights. *Hound & Horn* went on for a long time, but I lost interest in it, because it was taken over by the Southern Agrarians and the Trotskyites and a lot of people who were in politics. And I wasn't.

LOWRY: O.K. Now, what about the Society for Contemporary Art?

KIRSTEIN: Well, that was important. I mean, it was a precedent for a museum. Actually, it was like *Hound & Horn*. It was a kind of passport, and it enabled me to meet and know Nelson Rockefeller—which was very important for me, because when I first came to New York, and with the founding of the Museum of Modern Art, I had a considerable amount of prestige, owing to this thing we did at Harvard. And one of my tutors at Harvard was Alfred Barr, who was a director of the museum. And he put me in a situation at the museum of considerable influence, and I did a lot of shows at the museum and involved myself. And then I was very much involved with Rockefeller Center and the beginning of it with Nelson. I did a mural show, for example, to enable the architects to look at people who would be chosen to paint murals. And I got mixed up with Diego Rivera and the destruction of his big mural ["Man at the Crossroads" was removed from Rockefeller Center and reconstituted in Mexico City], and then the patronage of Gaston Lachaise, for example, and early Noguchi, and all the things that Nelson was interested in.

LOWRY: Was there also, in this whole period of your adolescence and early young manhood, the influence or contacts of people through your sister? Or was that later?

KIRSTEIN: No, it was before, actually. After 1922 and 1923, my sister was living in London, and she was sort of on the fringes of Bloomsbury, and I met the writer David Garnett, who was a great friend of hers, and through them I met Maynard Keynes. There was a sculptor who was very influential for me—a man named Stephen Tomlin, who married Julia Strachey. And I knew all those people quite well, as well as a kid could know them—a rather precocious kid, that's to be sure. But they were very familiar to me. There were parties with Virginia Woolf and Roger Fry, and all that kind of thing.

LOWRY: Did it also extend to France?

KIRSTEIN: I started knowing people in France around 1933, through Virgil Thomson—before that, actually, but I *really* got to know people through Virgil. He introduced me to a variety of contacts. And from about 1926 and 1927 I got to know people in Paris.

LOWRY: What was going on between the time you graduated from Harvard and the time you came to New York?

KIRSTEIN: I lived half in Cambridge and half in New York. I stayed in Cambridge through 1931, and then I came to New York in 1932. And I wanted to learn all about New York, the same way I learned about Europe. New York was to me an exotic situation, which I knew nothing about. I had met Muriel Draper in 1926, and then she became the guide of everything I did in New York. She introduced me into New York, and she more or less adapted me to be the kind of New Yorker that I wanted to be.

LOWRY: Why did she do that?

KIRSTEIN: Why? Well, she liked young animals. I mean, she had lots of young animals around, and I was another young animal.

LOWRY: But you may have had more interests than some. Did that mean something to her?

KIRSTEIN: Well, she didn't like everybody. She certainly liked a lot of people, many of whom were very well-known artists. A great many were. And she had connections with— She had been all over the world, she had a considerable reputation, and she was the mistress of Bernard Baruch at one time. And she was a considerable person. She more or less adopted me, and instructed me, and told me how to behave, and told me what to look for.

LOWRY: What was your age in relation to her son, Paul Draper?

KIRSTEIN: I was Paul's age.

LOWRY: And did you have a place in New York when you were here?

KIRSTEIN: No. My sister had a house in New York, and I lived with her for a while. Then I more or less lived with Muriel. I moved into a place next to her. She had a little house on East Fifty-third Street, and I lived next door. But actually it was the same establishment.

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LOWRY: Wasn't this also right next door to Edmund Wilson?

KIRSTEIN: Yes. He had the house next door, on the other side.

LOWRY: So at this time you knew Wilson.

KIRSTEIN: I didn't ever know Wilson very well. I was always scared of Wilson. He always seemed to me to be Olympian and much better educated than anybody I knew, much smarter. He had absolutely no interest in me—why should he have? Although we became rather friends later on in his life. And he was very nice to me. But at that time it was quite different. He was on *The New Republic*, I think, at that time. He was a great friend of Muriel's. And then Carl Van Vechten was important to me. He had been dance critic on the New York *Times*. All these people . . . There was a very cohesive society then. I mean, Muriel had this salon on Thursday afternoons, and people would gather there and you'd see the same people.

LOWRY: How were you and she brought together for the first time?

KIRSTEIN: I had met by accident a boy named Richardson King Wood, who was a New Yorker who had gone to Kings and had been more or less adopted by Eliot. And Eliot suggested that I know him; he was then working for Knopf. And I liked Dick Wood very, very much indeed. And he had had the same relationship with Muriel that I was to have, and I sort of succeeded him. He got married and left Muriel, and I took his place.

LOWRY: Moving to New York, living there was actually a kind of temporary abode, because you were still doing a lot of travelling and questing, weren't you?

KIRSTEIN: Well, this was 1932 now, and I was very much involved. I had two or three great friends in New York. I met some people who I felt were very exotic and strange. They were all adventurers of a sort; they were in the half-world. And they were vaguely—well, I don't know what you call it: extralegal. It was during Prohibition, and I met some people I could have got in an awful lot of trouble with. It was very much like the aristocratic world of Boston, only it was on a different level. It was traditional—except that these people were all disinherited. The ones in Boston were inheritors; these people were all disinherited. And I wanted to become as anonymous as possible, so that I could pass in and out of this world. One of the people I liked best was a fireman, who taught me how to box. And I saw these people quite a lot, and I could adapt myself more or less easily.

LOWRY: The compulsion to do this or the motivation to do this was a feeling you said you had when you left Harvard—that you had become too class-bound?

KIRSTEIN: Well, I knew how to behave in one way.

LOWRY: In one class.

KIRSTEIN: In one class. The only people I knew were people of inherited wealth who had a certain kind of behavior, which I liked very much. I mean, I admired all that. But then also they were mindless, and they also drank a good deal, and that frightened me. And there were two or three violent cases, as there always are in these things, of suicides or accidents.

LOWRY: So you went, in a way, like an oscillation, to the other side.

KIRSTEIN: To the other side. But, of course, it wasn't complete, because in the meantime I came to know Nelson and his world, and Wally Harrison [the architect Wallace Harrison] and his mother, and Eddie Warburg's people [Edward Warburg was a classmate of Kirstein's at Harvard and an early supporter of the School of American Ballet], and all the people around the Museum of Modern Art.

LOWRY: Though you were doing things with Nelson Rockefeller—I mean the things around the museum and Radio City, and so on—and you were still carrying on with *Hound & Horn*, you didn't feel in any settled vocation?

KIRSTEIN: I was so occupied with so many things that it didn't bother me particularly. I was completely and totally occupied. I was involved with Nelson and the whole business of decorating Rockefeller Center and the commissions, and it was a very exciting time, and I got to know Nelson really quite well. We were rather intimate, in a way, at that time. And I used to go to his mother's place a lot, and I went out to Pocantico a lot; we saw each other a good deal. And, on the other hand, I was developing my friendships with other people and friends of Muriel.

LOWRY: And you didn't feel any anxiety that you had to define more what you wanted to do.

KIRSTEIN: No, I was sort of taken along on general strength and enthusiasm. I seemed to be able to do anything I wanted, simply because I knew everybody. I mean, I knew anybody I *wanted* to know. And then I became a friend of Wally Harrison's. All the people around Nelson more or less accepted me as somebody around.

LOWRY: Was James Johnson Sweeney then at the Museum of Modern Art?

KIRSTEIN: I never got along with him very well. I knew him; we were perfectly friendly but I never really . . . My friends there were Alfred Barr and Jere Abbott. [Abbott shared director's authority with Barr.] Alfred was a very harsh instructor. He was a very puritanical, Presbyterian character. But he was very good for me, and he believed in enthusiasm—very remarkably. And then, later on, through Nelson again, I became a friend of René d'Harnoncourt, whom I liked very much, and who helped me an enormous amount. But that was a good deal later.

LOWRY: Much later. Do you think d'Harnoncourt was put in there to give a businesslike control?

KIRSTEIN: No, no, he was put in because he could talk to Nelson and Nelson was bored by modern art and he was bored by Alfred. Alfred exasperated him.

LOWRY: But d'Harnoncourt put Alfred a little bit on an island, even though he had a whole body of curators.

KIRSTEIN: He displaced Alfred completely; threw Alfred out. René ran the museum.

LOWRY: D'Harnoncourt was appointed to displace him?

KIRSTEIN: Absolutely. He did it very skillfully.

LOWRY: We have not talked about the dance in your early residence in New York. In Boston, of course, you had attended dance performances.

KIRSTEIN: Yes, a lot. I had a cousin named Nat Woolf who took me to Isadora Duncan and took me to ballet performances. He took me to Pavlova. Whatever there was, I saw.

LOWRY: Now, when you were coming into New York at this time, between 1930 and 1932, was there a particular interest in dance?

KIRSTEIN: I was always very much interested in it. I saw Martha Graham in the Greenwich Village Follies in 1923 or 1924, I guess it was, and I was always interested in looking at dancing. I never thought . . . I mean I

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always dreamed of the idea of an American ballet, but it seemed so out of the question I couldn't do anything about it. But I was connected with the League of Composers in the beginning, and with Stokowski's various things. I started going to Russian ballet in 1923, and gradually the idea came to me that this was what I really wanted to do. But at the beginning I didn't dare do it, because I wanted to do it so much. I thought it couldn't happen. It was so unlikely. So there were a lot of excuses.

LOWRY: You didn't have many connections with people in dance?

KIRSTEIN: No, nobody until 1933, and then really through Virgil Thomson. I think that Virgil more or less fixed me on the idea of doing it. He sort of said, "Well, why don't you do it? It can be done—why don't you do it?" He was living in Paris, and I'd known him a little bit at Harvard.

LOWRY: I never knew he did that.

KIRSTEIN: Oh, yes, he was most important. Virgil was the person who introduced me to Pavel Tchelitchew, to Christian Bérard [the stage designer], all those who were friends of his. He was the first person who put me in touch—at one remove, actually—with Balanchine, through Edward James [the patron who backed Les Ballets 1933]. He was very active in making music at that time, and he was a member of a variety of Paris salons. He had entrée all over the place.

LOWRY: But, with Virgil, Balanchine was not in the picture as an individual?

KIRSTEIN: No, no. It was an idea of the ballet as a generalization. The principal idea was that I could do it. Monroe Wheeler was important, too, because *he* thought I could do it.

LOWRY: And at the time Monroe Wheeler was . . .

KIRSTEIN: A curator at the Museum of Modern Art. Actually, he was in Paris then, but I had known him for years. It all sort of coalesced in the summer of 1933.

LOWRY: You did at this time see more Russian ballet than you had before?

KIRSTEIN: I saw the Diaghilev Ballet from about 1923 or 1924 through 1929. And then I saw the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in 1933 and George's company.

LOWRY: Ballet de Paris?

KIRSTEIN: No, this was before that. It was the ballet he had with René Blum. It was 1932—the year before the Ballets 1933, with Edward James. And Virgil had connections with those people. James's mother was Mrs. Willy James, and his uncle was the Arthur Curtiss James who ran the Northern Pacific Railway and died and left him an enormous fortune. Edward married Tilly Losch, and it was really her company.

LOWRY: But Balanchine became involved. It was a way of making a production or two?

KIRSTEIN: That's right.

LOWRY: And did James then put money into Ballets '33?

KIRSTEIN: Oh, yes, he put a lot of money into it. Also, Coco Chanel did, too.

LOWRY: But, again, not to make a vehicle for Balanchine?

KIRSTEIN: Well, I think Chanel was interested in Balanchine. She was interested in ballet as such; she had backed Diaghilev, and she helped George in relation to his association with Diaghilev.

LOWRY: Now, at the time we are speaking about, though you know Virgil and you've been introduced to James, you're not around the fringes of either one of these things?

KIRSTEIN: No, I had nothing to do with it. I was introduced. I went onstage for the first time with Tchelitchew; and Virgil had introduced me to him. He was doing scenery for George Balanchine at that time.

LOWRY: And now it was already Ballets '33.

KIRSTEIN: Yes.

LOWRY: We've talked about your studying art history, your studying painting as a would-be painter, travelling to museums everywhere. You also became a very important source of moral, and sometimes financial, support for individual painters and sculptors you encouraged. When did you begin to do this, with your own financial resources, as a conscious role? How much of it was connected with your work for ballet?

KIRSTEIN: At the start, none of it was. I went to France in 1925 and 1926 and I met some painters—the first in whom I was interested at all. And I commissioned a portrait of a friend of mine and myself, which didn't turn out very well, and my father thought it was a considerable waste of money. But in 1927 I met Isamu Noguchi, who was then a young sculptor working with Buckminster Fuller, and we arranged a show of their work at Harvard.

LOWRY: Whose work?

KIRSTEIN: Bucky Fuller's and Isamu's. And I commissioned a bust of myself from Noguchi, and my father liked it very much. After that, I wanted to see how sculptors worked, and I persuaded Eddie Warburg and some other friends to have their portraits done by Gaston Lachaise, and I always hung around studios, because I was very much interested in the technique of their craft. And I looked at objects in museums much more carefully, since I had some comprehension of the way they were done. None of this particularly had anything to do with ballet, at the start, but, of course, it was useful later on, when I talked to painters in relation to the scenery they did. The first ballet décor that I had much responsibility for was with the painter Franklin Watkins, of Philadelphia, who had won the Carnegie International Prize for painting—in 1935, I think it was. In any case, he did a ballet for Balanchine called "Transcendence," and the designs were very handsome; they're now in the Museum of Modern Art. After that, we commissioned a considerable number of painters, the most notable of whom was Pavel Tchelitchew.

LOWRY: Now, Tchelitchew had been involved previously—at least by '33, in Paris—in your beginning to get closer to people who had been around the Diaghilev company?

KIRSTEIN: That's right. Tchelitchew had done the ballet "Ode" for Diaghilev, to the Nicolas Nabokov score, in 1928. And I met him in 1933, and he was a considerable influence on everything I did after that time, until he died.

LOWRY: And though he seemed to be a little ambivalent, I think you have said, about your establishing an American ballet, he thought that if you were going to do it the effort around Balanchine was better than with others?

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KIRSTEIN: That's right. I mean, he was always ambivalent. He used dancers as models. He had been a kind of amateur dance student himself, in Russia, and he designed radically new ideas in ballet. That is, he used light rather than paint, and his ballet "Errante" was the first thing we did which we thought had a very innovative, important division from others in stage scenery. He never cared about ballet as an institution; he was interested in it, really, only as a subject for his own pictures. And he became bored with it. Later on, when we wanted him to work with Stravinsky, and Stravinsky very much wanted him, he refused.

LOWRY: Did Noguchi come back into the picture for ballet?

KIRSTEIN: Noguchi never started out that way. The first time he worked with us was for a ballet that Merce Cunningham did to music by John Cage called "The Seasons," in 1947. Later on, Stravinsky was very much interested in his sculpture, and he was commissioned to do "Orpheus."

LOWRY: And Lachaise?

KIRSTEIN: Lachaise had nothing to do with ballet.

LOWRY: What about Elie Nadelman, of whom you made quite a significant study, as well as, perhaps, gave financial support?

KIRSTEIN: No, I never gave him any; I became friends with his wife after his death, and wrote a book about him, and acquired quite a few of his sculptures. But that had nothing to do with patronage.

LOWRY: Were there frequent cases like that of the painter and printmaker June Wayne, who said to me, "Well, Mac, of course Kirstein; he gave me my first show, he was responsible for it." Were there many cases like that?

KIRSTEIN: Yes, there were quite a few painters and sculptors who were interested in me and whom I was able to help in a small way, and in whom I had no further interest after the *work* no longer interested me. It was very hard. First of all, I didn't have a very good eye at the start, and I was accidentally impressed by a variety of people, very often for their personalities rather than for their product.

LOWRY: But that's not always wrong, is it?

KIRSTEIN: I don't know whether it's wrong or right; sometimes it's a waste of time, a waste of time and money, but one is allowed to make mistakes. I never had very much money to spend, actually, but at that time money went farther and lasted longer. And I was able to influence other people to be attracted to certain artists.

LOWRY: But in some of the essays, catalogues, and so on, you actually were functioning as a professional art historian, whether you touted yourself as that or not, and there's no disagreement about that even among people in *that* field.

KIRSTEIN: Well, I was an amateur art historian and I never had any particular interest in aesthetics or in academic attributions. I'd gone through the Fogg Museum and I knew how to use a library, and also I'd been familiar with a number of museums, particularly the National Gallery in London, the Prado, and the Louvre. So a certain kind of painting and sculpture was real to me. And I had some information and I could talk to artists on their own terms.

LOWRY: Also, some of your tutors or teachers were art historians, like Agnes Mongan?

KIRSTEIN: Yes, Agnes took me to Florence for the first time, in 1929, and she taught me the whole Berenson method.

LOWRY: Who was directing your thesis on El Greco?

KIRSTEIN: Leonard Opdycke, who had taught a very good course in Baroque architecture in France and Italy. I followed his teaching looking at buildings when I went abroad in the summers. I had a very methodical training, really and truly.

LOWRY: That's what I'm trying to bring out. It is interesting that when you helped form the Society for Contemporary Art at Harvard it was about important painters of that time who were really the key people, some of them, in the then *modern* movement. But you weren't already picking one painter or another; the connection between the Society and your work that we have been discussing was rather tangential? Is that right?

KIRSTEIN: Well, I don't know if that's the word for it. The fact is, I've always had a historical attitude. I never felt that one school or one epoch in itself had any priority or enduring quality. I was very much interested in so-called modern art in the twenties, but my instruction in art history made me very suspicious of most of it, and, of course, I had a close connection with Alfred Barr and the formulation of the Museum of Modern Art, and I soon began to feel that a great deal of it was meretricious.

LOWRY: Particularly when the Abstract Expressionist movement came along?

KIRSTEIN: Particularly then.

LOWRY: And most of the other people at MOMA at that time, with the possible exception of Andrew Ritchie [curator of the department of painting and sculpture], didn't have the feeling that it was meretricious, or at least didn't act on it?

KIRSTEIN: Well, Alfred Barr had a peculiar attitude about art in any case. I never heard him make a qualitative judgment. He treated everything as if it were an ethnographical object. He could arrange things in categories by saying that of this sort of thing, this is fine. But he never would make a qualitative judgment. He was a Presbyterian minister, actually, and had a strong ethical sense. He felt that freedom was the most important thing and anybody could do what he liked. I think he was a kind of waylaid pupil of John B. Watson and behaviorism. I think he had a sinister effect on art in general.

LOWRY: You once said to me that it was too bad about the Museum of Modern Art in that, in one sense, it missed its whole possible function because it had chosen simply to describe modern art, as you put it—label it and show it—and not to judge it or make distinctions.

KIRSTEIN: I think that what happened to the Museum of Modern Art was very instructive, and when it comes to be written about there will be two big themes in the history of the Museum of Modern Art—which, after all, has been extremely influential. One is its founding. It came into being as a kind of agglomeration of the collections of several important New York collectors who banded together and formed it. And they were determined to eliminate the situation in which a painter would be recognized only long after his death. There would be no time lag in the discovery of genius. Second, there have been notable omissions in the interests of the Museum of Modern Art, and these came about in a rather peculiar way, when Nelson Rockefeller chose René d'Harnoncourt to take the place of Alfred Barr as director. D'Harnoncourt's interest was largely in folk art and the art of pre-industrial

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people. And he made wonderful exhibitions of Oceanic, African, Amerindian, and Pre-Columbian art; these exhibitions, which had nothing to do with modern art—but were wonderfully installed and very well catalogued—threw a whole different accent on artistic activity. They didn't have any effect on anybody, I don't think, in the art world, but they had an enormous effect on the public.

LOWRY: Alfred North Whitehead and George Santayana occur in your reflections on your education, and Nietzsche and other philosophers of an earlier time. Setting Nietzsche aside, whom else might you consider a provocative influence?

KIRSTEIN: I never could understand anything about philosophy. I never saw the point of it; I don't see the point of it now. It seems to me an absolute waste of time all the way down. It seems to me not a subject for consideration, and I don't consider that Nietzsche was a philosopher. I feel that he was an aphorist. The various patterns that people have made putting abstractions in order seem to have historical significance, if the history of ideas interests you. The history of ideas doesn't interest me at all. And I don't understand anything about it. There's a very good book by Bertrand Russell called "The Wisdom of the West." The basis of it is the pre-Socratics. His point of view is there was nothing original—everything was either a dilution or an inflation of certain concepts, once and for all. I don't think any of this is very significant, except as defining one's idea of history and relegating philosophy to the history of the psychology of the philosophers. I've never been able to find the use of them. I can't take it seriously as a very useful formulation, the way that I can use works of art as tools. I suppose that the definition of Hobbes or of Marx gives a certain rigidity and structure to people's attitudes, but it doesn't do anything for me as far as appreciation of works of art is concerned, which, after all, has been my prime consideration and my occupation.

LOWRY: The aphoristic, through all the years that I've known you, seems to me to be the key to a lot of your perceptions.

KIRSTEIN: It was a kind of style. The point about Nietzsche seems to be the reduction of wisdom. He impacted regular experience and observation into an irreducible form. And his particular definitions were so remarkably apt and concise and considered that the enormous verbiage of academic philosophy seems to reduce itself to nothing very meaningful. But also it's the impression of Nietzsche's mind, which was based on philology, the meaning of words, and the precision of meaning, but it transformed—it transcended—any kind of verbalism into an express consideration of certain works, which were Bizet and Wagner: how to formulate his reaction to "Carmen" and to the "Ring" was a key to everything else that he felt. Its importance to me was its precision, not only as a statement but as a spotlight on two very great works, "Carmen" and the "Ring." The repudiation of Wagner, and the praise of Bizet and the whole content of what Nietzsche calls "the gay science"—certain kinds of melody or the removal of gross seriousness and self-consideration—and Nietzsche's general over-all view seem to me of comparable use at the present, just the same way that a long time ago various philosophers built the same sort of meaning as a tool. I think there's so much pressure of time that one needs something in the context of time, the way that Plato and Aristotle served as long as they did. The way that Aquinas served so long.

LOWRY: When you extract what you just said from Nietzsche, is it a conflict for you or is it of no consequence that the broad-brush account of Nietzsche, in the Nordic culture of his time, is not about the praise of "gay science" and so forth? He is usually just generalized and encapsulated as something sadistic, pessimistic, destructive, for the worship of unconscious forces, and so on—all that kind of proto-Nazi stuff that has been put on him.

KIRSTEIN: It has nothing to do with proto-Nazi stuff. That's one of the greatest mistakes that have ever been made.

LOWRY: How do you think it happened?

KIRSTEIN: It was very carefully worked out—by his sister, particularly. When he talked about the "Superman," he really meant the fulfillment of the humanly most possible. And this was transformed. First of all, he wasn't a German. He denied being German; he was a Swiss. And the Teutonic attitude was taken over by his sister and by the whole of the post-Wagnerian succession. It was an appropriation; it had nothing to do with him. He was neither an anti-Semite nor a pessimist. He was a realist and he understood very clearly what the possibilities were. And he was also an optimist in relation to hoping for the greatest potential, which was the *Übermensch*, but the *Übermensch* wasn't a "Superman," he was the "Overman."

LOWRY: And you think there were people who really knew that always—it's just that the other was deliberately cultivated and popularized?

KIRSTEIN: It's the easiest thing. People don't think very clearly, they take what's useful. And this was very useful for all that. And, after all, he died comparatively young, of syphilis. His sister took over his manuscripts and edited them as she wished to edit them. And it's only since Princeton and Walter Kaufmann that anything clearly like the actuality has been known. And still he hasn't nearly the prestige or status of a Kierkegaard. He's not a Protestant theologian; he's a much different thing. First of all, he was interested in the pre-Socratic philosophers, and, like them, he was a very great teacher. It was on the basis of the pre-Socratics. It was the political manipulation of a reputation.

LOWRY: How did the influence of Gurdjieff fit into the Kirstein who began real plans for his career in 1933?

KIRSTEIN: Well, it's very hard to say. It was a question of how to survive, in a way. He taught a technique of survival and instruction in what one could call "the education of the sly fellow." This slyness, it was the ability to retreat and an attempt to eliminate one's own particular preferences. He made the great point that the personality of a young man really doesn't exist—what he demonstrates is merely an accidental bundle of preferences which he's come upon, and it's a very small choice. And there was a great deal of practical information that Gurdjieff provided: the accommodation of people unlike yourself, the necessity for extreme behavior, the accommodation of extreme behavior, so many things . . . that combination of moral and physical method which de-

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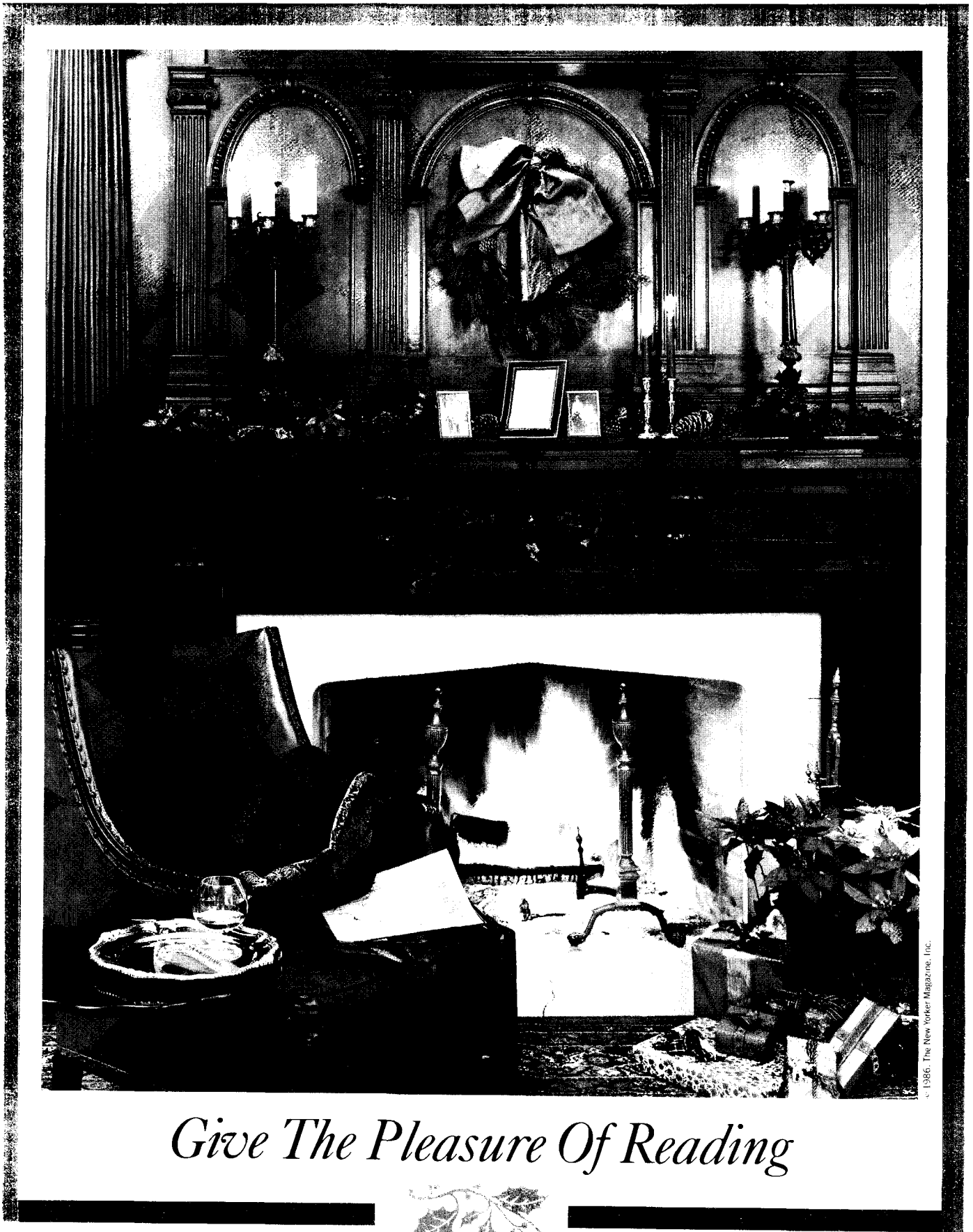

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termined a lot of what I did. But I can't say it was in any formal sense an influence, and, as a matter of fact, I never cared anything about Gurdjieff's writing, and I never read any of it very much, past my attempt at the beginning to make some sense out of it —which I never have. But that wasn't the point—it was the people that I met who were affected by him, and a certain kind of common sense that went way beyond any normal behavior. The big thing about him was that he let me feel that anything was possible.

LOWRY: A number of people had an influence on your feeling that anything was possible, did they not? You cited, for example, your father's belief that really anything was possible for you.

KIRSTEIN: Well, it comes from many points of view: some things are metaphysically possible, some things are physically possible. I think that Nelson Rockefeller, by the fact that he had unlimited wealth and could do anything he wanted to, was an enormous launch from a purely material and physical point of view. He always talked about buildings as if they were built, and I was involved in the building of Rockefeller Center, and its decorations, and I saw how these vast amounts of material and money were manipulated, and consequently I always had the idea of building a theatre. It never daunted me, because I'd seen things like this built before. And, one way or another, through the idea of the difficulties that Diaghilev had and the impetus that Nelson provided, nothing seemed to me very difficult.

LOWRY: And yet, even a few years after you graduated from Harvard, even by the time you had come to New York, having been in Europe several times, you say to me now, you were still in a way weighing, circling, a little bit tentative about what you wanted to do. I'm trying to relate the ease with which you helped create the Society for Contemporary Art and *Hound & Horn*, and the relative ease with which you left *Hound & Horn* to other people's influence—all that. As you know, you're frequently referred to as the only example in the last generation of a Renaissance man.

KIRSTEIN: I think that this is a question of luck. Some people are born chronologically lucky. I was extremely lucky in most of the circumstances of my birth, and because I coincided with a period when certain things were possible. If I'd been born earlier or later, I don't think I'd have had the same chance. If I'd been born earlier, I'd have been in the First World War. If I'd been born later, I wouldn't have been in the Second. And the fact that I inherited a great deal of European interests from Harvard graduates going to Paris at the time I did, and they really served me as a postgraduate course. As for not knowing what I wanted to do, I thought I knew around 1930. I felt then that I really was involved with the ballet. I started taking ballet lessons, and other things seemed to me less important. And the rather vague ambitions I had to be either a portrait painter or a novelist or a diplomat—they were rather childish, but, on the other hand, the odd thing was that they gave me a kind of apprenticeship, and in many ways I had to practice a kind of diplomacy, even though on an unofficial level.

LOWRY: I can see that. I think that's very telling. Can we go back for a little bit to Gurdjieff? You met disciples of Gurdjieff and felt some influence indirectly of his attitude toward personality or development before the experience of meeting Gurdjieff himself. Is that right?

KIRSTEIN: Yes. I had a friend who was a little bit older than I named Payson Loomis, who for a considerable time served as Gurdjieff's secretary and translator, and it was through Payson that I met Gurdjieff.

LOWRY: In what year?

KIRSTEIN: 1927.

LOWRY: And it was memorable.

KIRSTEIN: Well, yes. I've written a good deal about it. It's a matter of record, as far as that goes.

LOWRY: Is it possible that physical beauty figured greatly in Gurdjieff's acceptance of people?

KIRSTEIN: No, I don't think that had anything to do with it.

LOWRY: Because that impression seems to me to have been given in a lot of things that have been written about Gurdjieff, and even in Peter Brook's "Meetings with Remarkable Men."

KIRSTEIN: I don't think so. I think that very often there were people who were handsome around him, but I don't think it made any difference to him.

LOWRY: When you had come into your very active phase of 1933 and after, were there ways in which you conducted yourself or made decisions which you felt you could ascribe to influences of his philosophy or attitude?

KIRSTEIN: I don't think there are any specifics, but I think that in a general way the idea of behaving as if something were true even if it wasn't, and using as a kind of target or magnet a notion that if you could imagine a situation *as if* it were true, *as if* we had a theatre, *as if* there were a ballet company, and it became more and more precise. And I think that a certain analytical attitude toward what was possible. I think he taught that anything was possible but you had to analyze what the chances and the possibility were in a rather clinical, cold way. And I think that he saved a lot of time by forcing a negative situation. There was always with him a balance of positive and negative. There was the positive possibility, the negative impossibility. And it was always about fifty-one per cent one way and forty-nine the other. Well, it's awfully hard to explain it easily, but the fact is that he would take sort of the ordinary facts of life and reduce them to the essential, in which everything was very important and nothing was important. And this oscillation was a kind of rocking back and forth all the time, which upset some people, because there was no certainty in it. And I know that a lot of people who disliked him or who came to hate him felt that he was extremely destructive. And there *was* a destructive attitude about him, but I've come to believe that essentially it was beneficial. What he did was to make people more like *themselves*. If they could stand the oscillation, it reduced them to a rather strong sense of capacity. And also it taught an acceptance of defeat and the uses of defeat. I think that was the most powerful thing. Unquestionably, it's a very difficult discipline, and I think the nearest thing to it probably is Jesuit discipline. And it wasn't by any accident that he was a seminarian himself. He understood very well very rigorous behavior.

LOWRY: I'm not clear, because I'm not a professional student of this subject, about whether the majority of disciples of or learners from Gurdjieff were people who committed themselves, somehow, to his presence or the

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presence of others who were followers for considerable periods of time, like six months or a year, or whatever—or is this not the fact?

KIRSTEIN: It's very hard to say. On the one hand, you have somebody like Peter Brook. Apart from him, I don't know of anybody who ever made any particular very important mark in the world. Gurdjieff had no interest in personal fame, he had no interest in developing anybody; he had no interest in proselytizing, and he felt that he was a source of a certain kind of information and that there were certain people who were attracted by the kind of information he could provide. And I think a number of people who were in close contact with him felt the considerable value of this. There is a doctor here in New York, Dr. William Welch, who was a cardiac specialist and was once president of the New York Heart Association, who was also Gurdjieff's doctor and wrote a very interesting memoir. I don't know of anybody else whom the world would consider something particularly special. Gurdjieff had no interest in attracting famous people; in fact, he practiced a very rigid behavior in refusing people and of "disgusting" people, as he said, to save time.

LOWRY: Do you think that before he died he thought of you as a follower of his discipline?

KIRSTEIN: I don't think he even remembered me. I think there were hundreds of people like me.

LOWRY: You said something, by the way, in that recital which strikes me forcefully. You were talking about thinking something was true, even if it wasn't, and deliberately cultivating that thought, or feeling, as if you had a large theatre and a large company. This has perhaps nothing directly to do with what we were talking about concerning Gurdjieff, but at that moment it occurred to me that when you and George Balanchine were just beginning your school, the American Ballet, and so on, a lot of other people in the field may have said, "My goodness, they are very, very grand and focussed and serious about something that is really on a very small scale, comparably." And yet both you and Balanchine, it seems to me, *did* that. I don't mean that you accepted what was desired as if it were already there, and then it would come about. But, in a way, it's how you did talk about it, isn't it?

KIRSTEIN: Well, after all, George had been in the Imperial School. He had been in Russia, he had been in contact with the great theatre; he had then come to Diaghilev, and had been for five years in touch with a big producing company. None of this was particularly unfamiliar to him. And the fact that I had some contact with him seemed to make it in one way more or less inevitable. I never doubted the fact that sooner or later it would happen. I mean, very rapidly we did what others failed to do. We were hired by the Metropolitan Opera Association, and although our relationship failed, nevertheless we were recognized almost immediately; that was within four years of when we started.

LOWRY: When I asked Balanchine about that very period and the hiatus in your affairs and your going to war, and so on, I asked, "Did you ever really doubt that you and Lincoln would ultimately have the kind of major company and season that you and he had always thought about?" He hadn't really doubted it, though he never knew, he said, what was happening to bring it about, because it always came from you.

KIRSTEIN: I took care of the public aspects of it, the political aspects, the official aspects. And, of course, in this arena the most important conflict was over the new theatre.

LOWRY: Over the question of the State Theatre and the move of New York City Ballet from the old City Center building in 1964?

KIRSTEIN: That's right. It was the question of the control of the State Theatre. It surfaced rather early on, because I was a member of the Lincoln Center board at the beginning. I resigned when I felt that Lincoln Center, as a holding company, wished to control every element. They couldn't control the Metropolitan, they couldn't control the Philharmonic, but they thought they could control the City Center of Music and Drama, which was the institutional umbrella for New York City Ballet and the New York City Opera. That was the worst fight. It was a very complex situation, in which I was very deeply involved. I felt very violent about it, and tempted to murder, even.

The situation at Lincoln Center involved tension between Governor Nelson Rockefeller's interests and other interests, including those of his

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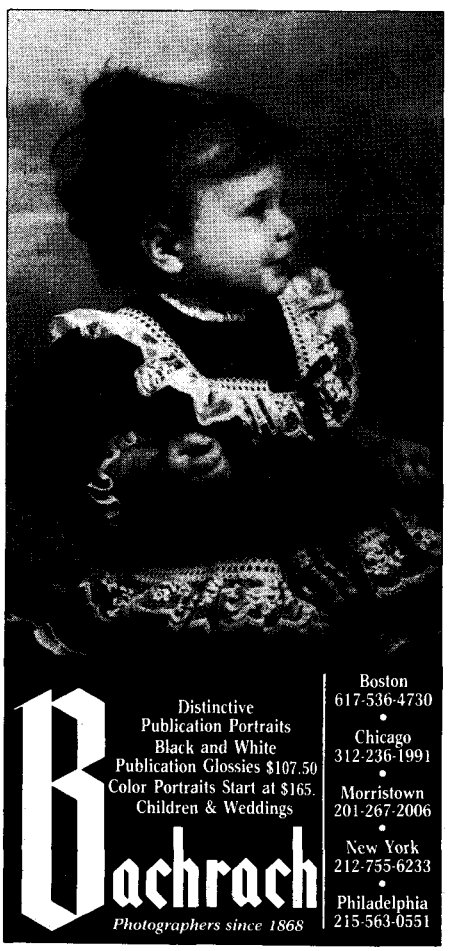

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brother John. Nelson announced that the State of New York would give us a theatre as a monument to the state. And the legislation was put forth in Albany to erect a theatre ostensibly for dance as one of the cluster of new theatres in Lincoln Center. Before the building was completed I had discussions with Edgar Young, John Rockefeller's aide and handyman. And the problem was obviously a problem of control. The City Center of Music and Drama was the lessee of the new theatre. The board of Lincoln Center strove to keep it dependent like the rest of Lincoln Center, because John Rockefeller's notion of Lincoln Center was that it was a piece of real estate which he controlled. He couldn't touch the Metropolitan Opera Association or the Philharmonic Society. Without the Met and the Philharmonic, they couldn't have erected Lincoln Center, because there wasn't any cause for it. The ballet and the New York City Opera were in the old City Center building, and we needed a new place. And we could bring to Lincoln Center our aura of public service, charitability, tax exemption. Nelson let me choose the architect, and it was Philip Johnson. Nelson said to Balanchine and me on the night the new theatre opened, "You take it from here, it's yours." John Rockefeller didn't see it that way at all. He saw it merely as a property that Lincoln Center had to control. He had no interest in the performing arts, really, or in any other kind of art. On the other hand, he had enormous interest in control. He understood art only as therapy—it was good for you whether or not it helped your digestion.

In any case, the fight was over who controlled the State Theatre and its bookings. If the prospective deficits demanded, which of course they would, then the house could be hired out to commercial interests. We intended a popular theatre with a pricing scale that would make tickets half the price of tickets at the Metropolitan Opera Association. In charge of this fight were a number of people who later on became very eminent in the arts and who masqueraded as public servants, although they were nothing but real-estate operators or brokers. But in the championship knockdown-drag-out fight Betty Cage, our manager, won. The conflict was of a bitterness and an unnecessary expense of energy which I've always regretted. Later on, I could understand very well that people who are conditioned only to what they consider the measure of money had to act in the way they had to act: it was destiny. And this was merely one of many fights in the arts; they're always about money and always will be. Only, since I had received Nelson's promise, I believed it. I don't blame him, because he never thought of the particular results that would be involved. On the other hand, the theatre had been given to me as some sort of a reward.

I hadn't spoken to Nelson directly since the beginning of the fight, but then one time he called me and asked me to lunch, and I said I wouldn't come to lunch if Lincoln Center was going to be discussed, because as far as I was concerned it was a closed story. He said, "No, Lincoln Center won't be discussed. I just want to see you because I'm so fond of you and I haven't seen you for a long time." Even knowing perfectly well what the issue at lunch would be, I could hardly refuse. So we had lunch and nothing was mentioned about Lincoln Center until he said that he had to go to an appointment and would I excuse him. As I stood up to go, he shook my hand and said, "What is all this about Johnny?" And so I laughed and turned around and walked out of the place.

LOWRY: In this moment of confrontation, do you think the Rockefeller and Lincoln Center people—those helping John in this confrontation—regarded you and Morton Baum as together, or was Baum the more vocal and difficult person they had to deal with?

KIRSTEIN: In all these things there's always a substratum that's never talked about. In this case, it was anti-Semitism. Morton Baum had been appointed by Mayor LaGuardia to oversee the city's interests in the properties held by the Metropolitan Opera Association on Thirty-ninth Street and the transfer of that property to Lincoln Center. The fact was that Baum was the only Jew at that time on the Metropolitan Opera board; the one prior Jew, Otto Kahn, was a convert to the Anglican Church. Baum was a poor boy from New York who was a very brilliant lawyer and an ardent Reform Jew who attended temple every week. He also talked too much for the pleasure of the board and he was removed. His resentment can hardly be measured.

I never suffered very greatly from anti-Semitism. I'd gone to Harvard, where there was a very strong sentiment of anti-Semitism, but, because of my father's wealth, and also because I happened to room with the nephew of the president of Harvard, this never touched me, although I was of course conscious of it. I was also conscious of the structure of Jewish society, which is itself anti-Semitic—that is, the German Jews don't like the Polish Jews and feel inferior to the Portuguese Jews, and so on. So I was very accustomed to all of this and I understood very clearly the attitude of the people who were responsible for the Metropolitan board. I must say that in my experience patricians have much less anti-Semitism than middle-class arrivistes. However, anti-Semitism was a considerable part of the substructure and the prejudice with which people faced Baum. And his resentment was of a muscular power, which was fuelled by this. He understood very well this kind of infighting, which the others did, too, only they considered themselves gentlemen and Baum didn't consider himself a gentleman. But Baum played the piano and he had an interest in music, which was a real interest, and he identified with Balanchine; and he gave us, as far as he could, a completely free hand. Thanks to him and to Betty Cage, the fight was won. It was a bloody fight and it was unnecessary. Or perhaps, historically, it was inevitable.

LOWRY: When the victory did go to the City Center, there was a great deal of satisfaction among your audience about Kirstein and Balanchine. Some of them at that time also felt very strongly about the New York City Opera. As far as the general public was concerned, was it not what you might call the populist victory, the democratic victory, and salutary in this respect?

KIRSTEIN: I don't know whether it was or not. I never felt that. Perhaps because the fight was a subterranean fight; it rarely emerged in the newspapers like subsequent fights now in rela-

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tion to Lincoln Center. I was on the Lincoln Center board from its inception, and I was invited on it not by John Rockefeller but by Anthony Bliss [the manager of the Metropolitan Opera], who was the heir to a dynastic tradition. His father, Cornelius Bliss, had managed the Met. At the beginning, Lincoln Center for the Musical Arts was the name that was used. And I persuaded the board at that time to call it Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, because the "musical arts" part of the name represented only a new Met and a new Philharmonic. It seemed to them the only constituents that were important. At that time, ballet had very little prestige, and the dance as such had less. There was hope for the opera company, but at the beginning the opera company had no part in the transfer to the State Theatre, which was built as a house for dance. At that time, there was neither the audience nor the participants for a fifty-two-week season. And the normal thing was to ask the secondary company, which was the New York City Opera Company, to share the house with us. It might have been better had things been different to have asked American Ballet Theatre to share the house, which would have been my choice and, indeed, I think, theirs. Today, the Metropolitan Opera House needs Ballet Theatre to fill out empty weeks, but their productions are not served by the size of the house, and it's not a very good house for dancing. The way it turned out is a fairly viable relationship in the State Theatre in which the opera and the ballet share twenty-three and twenty-two weeks of work a year. The rest of the time has to be rented out. On the other hand, if we hadn't won the fight the time would have been allocated to commercial entrepreneurs who could have charged anything they wanted, and the house would have lost its character.

LOWRY: Are there other instances or phases in your life which could be talked about in terms of either the frustration or the impediment of having to deal with irrationality—if I may use that term?

KIRSTEIN: Well, irrationality is something I am very hesitant to use as a term, simply because I know in my own life I've behaved irrationally on many occasions.

LOWRY: Let's shift the emphasis then. Are there instances that you might discuss?

KIRSTEIN: Well, there are a number, but they're of a nature which I feel is either too private or privileged.

LOWRY: No matter how polemical you have sometimes been as to ideas and principles and persons, you do not seem to have immersed yourself politically, if that's the right word. What I really want to probe is not your politics but your personal view of how man or men can control events—what these possibilities are. On the one hand, you believed you could do almost anything you badly wanted. But in less individualistic manifestations you believe "we"—I don't know whether that's the public or a whole group of us or a society—have really not much influence on political developments, social control, order or sanity in public life, and so on. Where does one's ability to control choices or events stop, in your experience, at least metaphorically?

KIRSTEIN: I was occupied with something that is considered of very little importance. Particularly at the time we started, ballet couldn't have been more inconsiderable. I feel usually that ninety-five per cent of the public has no interest in what you do. And the amounts of money given to the arts are derisory, generally speaking. What I feel about politics is that, generally speaking, people who are interested in politics are not very much interested in themselves except for the most elementary seizure of power. They're not interested in any kind of self-development. They can't afford to be, because if they judge themselves, generally speaking, they're criminal. And I have a great deal of doubt—I've always had—about anybody who sought elective office. I believe that there are people in public service just as there are in medicine. But the people who manipulate public power and public money, generally speaking, seem to me to be on a level a good deal lower than ordinary plumbers.

LOWRY: You feel in your professional, aesthetic, entrepreneurial life and your own cultivation of yourself and your interests through writing and in many other ways—you *must* feel a tremendous influence and impact upon your times. Yet when you think of the moment or moments when the political system reaches out to renew a choice of officeholders and have a Presidential election, make particular appointments, you feel your part in this cumulative process, electoral or otherwise, is so little likely to affect results that you are either skeptical or

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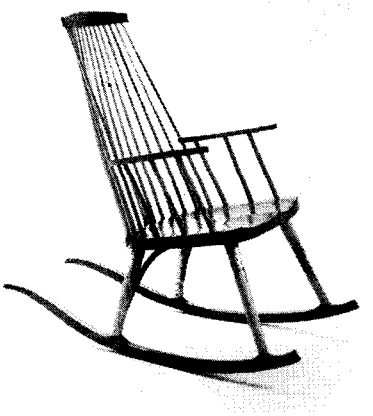
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indifferent—I can't always be sure which.

KIRSTEIN: It's been merely my experience that most people are so occupied with themselves, their own personal lives and their own personal business, that they have very little time for any very real, responsible thought about anybody else. I think most people have a very hard time imagining anybody else. And I think that, on the lowest possible level, the incidence of divorce in America proves that people really don't understand each other and are not willing to take the trouble to. And, consequently, the great waves of popular enthusiasm, or popular interest, or popular hysteria, in essence are so large and so compelling that any individual can't really afford to have anything to do with them. Particularly if he has an idea. Most artists are miserable in themselves and miserably achieve whatever they have to do, but at least they do what they wish, irrespective of the political process. And the persistence of the political situation, which is only aggravated—or it seems to be increasingly aggravated at the present moment—by a war or the threat of war and, of course, at the present moment, by doubt as to the whole existence of anything, would lead somebody to despair unless he had some kind of absurd belief in the importance of what he was doing or of his interest in it. I never thought that anything I did was particularly important; it merely interested me. And I think that it was perhaps superstition, because if I felt that anything was important or in its way useful or productive, it would have either delayed or prevented me. Because I was always afraid of the reverse, and that's what I got from Mr. Gurdjieff: never count on anything; the only thing that's sure is the insecure.

LOWRY: Does that also mean, in more pedestrian terms, that you were afraid to trust your luck?

KIRSTEIN: Yes, I think I was afraid to trust my luck. I felt that my luck had nothing to do with me, that it was a kind of gift, and that it was a very precious gift and also a very frail one—or, at least, I was very frail in accepting it. And I think that the idea of a crusade is always, to me, suspect. In watching Nelson's career as a political animal, it struck me again and again that he was a kind of victim, and that he was an admirable example of somebody who believed in stewardship and public service, and yet his own limitations were such that he never knew who he was, and he never essentially believed—I don't think—in what he did, except in relation to a kind of obsessive ambition.

LOWRY: He may never have really understood political figures that he had to deal with.

KIRSTEIN: He didn't have to deal with them, or at least he thought that; he could buy them.

LOWRY: You have shown the capacity to deal in very respectful and affectionate ways with people who had certain strongly developed talents or abilities. Your relationship with Morton Baum, for example, which I saw quite intimately, was, at times, in opposition to your particular ideas, but you considered the stakes. But it was also very affectionate, and full of respect for what *he* could do.

KIRSTEIN: Well, he was a very exceptional person, and when you say my respect for him was full it is true; he was a kind of father figure, and in many ways he was very much like my father. He was the best sort of what you might call public servant, although that wasn't exactly what it was.

LOWRY: He was. In your easy and determined collaboration with Morton Baum, on which you had to concentrate much more than Balanchine did, you accepted limitations and restraints which it was not in your character to accept.

KIRSTEIN: Well, it wasn't anything very admirable. It was a question of recognition of necessity. He gave me certain things that were possible, but certain things were impossible. I suggested things to him that he had not thought of, but he never considered them impossible. I think that he had a considerable precedent. He had the precedent of the Works Progress Administration, and he had the influence of the Musicians Emergency Fund and the making of a New York musicians' orchestra under Leonard Bernstein. There were elements all over the place that he utilized, and he really did have a comprehensive idea of a popular art center.

LOWRY: We're talking now more about Baum than about your own character and personality. I have cited him as one of those persons you got along with both out of respect and affection *and* necessity and opportunity. There is a great deal more evidence than has ever been written that you have been that way and had that ability or that largeness of spirit with a great many people, despite the kind of easy popular reputation that came along that you are also contentious, polemical, quite patrician and aristocratic.

KIRSTEIN: I think that was another point I learned from Mr. Gurdjieff, and that was to be as apparently passive as possible, to allow initiative as much as possible to be hidden. Everything in his particular method was about the subjugation of oneself. It was extremely important to doubt everything you did and to remember who you were. And of course it's hard to do that unless you *know* who you are. I don't think most people do. Most people don't care. If you yourself are your subject, which is what Gurdjieff taught, it takes an awful lot of energy; it takes a lot of moral energy. And of course it also leads to a kind of revelation of omnipotence. I've known people who became attracted by this idea who were very badly dislocated. Consequently, I have been hesitant to recommend it to anybody; on two or three occasions that I recommended it I told people whom I considered very unusual that I think this a useful bit of information.

LOWRY: What is the history of your growing usage of "the sly fellow"?

KIRSTEIN: Well, the great archetype of the sly fellow is Ulysses. But also in every ethnic culture there is a sly fellow, whether it's a monkey in India or a coyote in America.

LOWRY: Can you remember when you began first to cultivate that metaphor?

KIRSTEIN: No. I think that the acceptance of it becomes second nature. I think that it requires a considerable amount of essential coldness.

LOWRY: Is it possible that in your own case—"Memoirs of a Sly Fellow," and so on—the sly-fellow concept has been more a retrospective evaluation of your course of destiny than it was an early one that continued? Or am I wrong about that?

KIRSTEIN: Well, I don't know about definition. I always had a pretty good idea about what worked, what could work. Only, I didn't know how to do it.

LOWRY: But in your time and gen-

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eration in the United States, and latterly, the use of the phrase "sly fellow" does have the connotation for most people of a kind of cynical and calculating or cold thing.

KIRSTEIN: I think that's part of it. It has to be. Slyness is also the slyness of the serpent and the wisdom of the serpent. It's being flexible, it's being adaptable—a shape changer. What Gurdjieff also taught, metaphorically, was to be in two places at the same time, and that was one way of saving time. And also he taught how to vanish and how to disappear and how not to do things that you didn't want to do but to get the credit for doing them. And he was very useful in social behavior as far as I was concerned, because I'm not very social, but, on the other hand, I've had to attend a variety of gatherings. But one finds that as soon as a certain number of people are in a room nobody knows whether you're there or not.

LOWRY: So you're gone.

KIRSTEIN: So you're gone. And that saves time. And, also, a meaningless conversation can sound extremely flattering.

LOWRY: Part of the reason that you can be gone when there's a certain number of people in a room is that you are Lincoln Kirstein, right?

KIRSTEIN: I don't know what you mean.

LOWRY: I know you don't. And maybe that's a key to your success.

KIRSTEIN: I don't know. It isn't a question of success at all. If anybody has any perspective on the immensity of order in a religious sense, he can't count himself. Yourself . . . that's preposterous.

LOWRY: All right, now we're on a very different plane.

KIRSTEIN: I mean, if you have any idea of any kind of complexity or immensity or density, of general order, you're put in a position of nothingness. And I think this is true. I don't think I'm anything; I never have thought that. Whatever it is that activates it is a certain kind of energy that goes on. But the effect is ridiculous; it's absurd.

LOWRY: You are put in a position that negates it, you said, and reduces it to nothing. Is it true you are put *inevitably* or does one put *oneself* in that position, if he has the idea of immensity and complexity and so on? It is an act or at least a volition on your part to put yourself in that position, is it not?

KIRSTEIN: No. I'm put in it. I mean, it seems to me that anybody with any recognition or any perspective about anything is in this position.

LOWRY: He's not born with that recognition? He has to acquire it? It takes something in the way of self-development and effort . . .

KIRSTEIN: It may. The point is that I've had enough experience to see what any individual counts, how any individual counts. And it's just a question of coloration; some people are more picturesque than others.

LOWRY: How much does it bother you if it is clear that you are misunderstood?

KIRSTEIN: I cannot say that I'm misunderstood, exactly. Sometimes I'm put in a false position, but that's generally *my* fault. Very often I'm in a false position because I very often am too hasty. I see something very clearly and I presume because I see it clearly that the effect is immediate. And time and again I've been proved wrong. And *that* puts me in a false position, which I don't like at all.

LOWRY: But there are many people, even some with active roles in society or commenting or criticizing or acting —whatever—who have institutional or other roles, who cannot understand you in the end. They do not know the force and clarity and precision of what it is you have built and accomplished.

KIRSTEIN: Well, it isn't only a question of what *I've* done, but do they have any better idea about anything else?

LOWRY: That's possible. Perhaps not. But when they don't understand it —maybe I should use the word "comprehend"—when they don't comprehend it, are you troubled?

KIRSTEIN: No. Not in the slightest. I'm amazed when they do comprehend it. I'm amazed and grateful. I can't imagine anybody comprehending it or anybody interested. I'm not interested in them. I don't give a damn what they do. They couldn't interest me less. Why should they be interested in me? —W. MCNEIL LOWRY

(This is the second part of a two-part article.)

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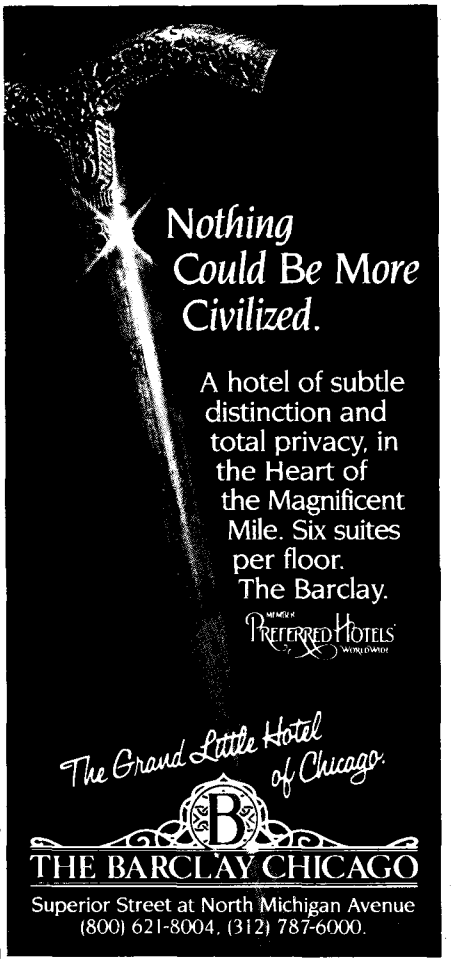
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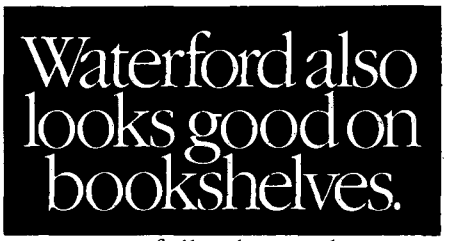

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ON AND OFF THE AVENUE

THE CHRISTMAS TABLE

ONE of the small pleasures of the holiday season is that the words "cuisine," "gourmet," and "haute" have never been part of the Christmas vocabulary, either in the home or in the press. "Food," "good," and "fancy" come into their own, and the cook can concentrate on such essentials as who, when, what, and how much, and unloading the dishwasher three or four times a day. At this time of year, just getting enough food on the table is a culinary triumph in itself—forget the degree of hauteness. From Thanksgiving until Twelfth Night, the number of people at any one meal, including breakfast ("Ma, some guys are crashing in the living room"), fluctuates between zero and excessive. Young and old drift in and out at odd times, and good plain food is about all the human frame can tolerate—or, indeed, craves.

Christmas dinner is a ritual, familiar and soothing, like "Silent Night." The trend in food stores this year is toward the traditional—British traditional in particular—playing on nostalgia for a time more read about than experienced. And what is more traditional than an authentic English plum pudding? Call Country Host, 1457 Lexington Avenue (95th), a mother lode of English cooking, and nail down one of its few remaining plum puddings. Usually, these have to be ordered a year ahead, but this year Country Host hopes to have enough on hand to accommodate all but the truly dilatory. The pudding comes in a bowl and weighs around two pounds; $10 a pound. (Country Host has moved into a house one block north of its former site, in order to get the whole cooking match—Mrs. Deme, her son and his family, the kitchen, and the shop—under one roof: a satisfactory arrangement in every way, except for Jeremy Deme, aged fourteen months, who does his best to undermine the efficiency of the kitchen.) Individual mince tarts are $1.50 each; a nine-inch tart is $12. Fruitcakes, in a round or a loaf shape, are $10 a pound without icing and $12 decorated with Royal icing, which means a layer of marzipan between the cake and the white icing. Albert cakes, "a Victorian sweet," are made with raisins, currants, candied lemon peel, and brandy in a short crust, and topped with white, unroyal icing; seventy-five cents each. For New Year's Day, the Demes have a traditional (in the British Isles) veal-and-ham pie—a hefty number encased in a decorated raised crust, with three hard-cooked eggs concealed inside it. It's to be eaten cold. The pie comes in a round or a loaf shape, and should prove restorative to those who are floundering on January 1st. It weighs about four and a half pounds, and costs from $35 to $45. Mrs. Deme's Szekely goulash, a classic *Hungarian* dish, consisting of sauerkraut and pork with paprika, is also comforting cold-weather fare. Her mother-in-law was Hungarian. ("She spoke with a charming accent—she was unable to say 'casserole,' and insisted on calling them 'carrousels.' ") This carrousel is one of the native dishes Mrs. Deme learned at her mother-in-law's knee; $6 a pint.

Soutine, 104 West 70th Street, is turning out impeccable English sweets, as usual. Plum pudding in a white crock, weighing about a pound and a half, is $20. The Scottish bun (rather like a groom's cake, in a very thin crust) is another New Year's specialty; $19. The great chocolate cake here, which can be frozen but when thawed doesn't taste as though it had been frozen, is still a bargain at $12.50. It comes in a red tin, and serves eight; the small size, in a clear box, costs $5. Gingerbread persons, five inches tall, come in two sexes: $5 for either one. A gingerbread house, with the door open, is decorated with white-icing icicles and a restrained number of gumdrops, Life Savers, and candy canes. It has a lopsided chimney with a small foil-covered chocolate Santa Claus peering out of it; $25.

Bloomingdale's fresh-food department, under Jim Laurence, has climbed on the bandwagon with some prepared dishes that in several cases out-British the British. Beef-marrow mousse is $14 a pound; lamb-and-mint stew is $12 a pound; potted duck in a half-litre crock is $22. Some of the dishes are more interesting from a historical than from a gastronomic point of view, and we prefer the cheddar wafers, which are crisp and sharp—just the thing with a cup of soup; $16 a pound. The Surrey leek-and-

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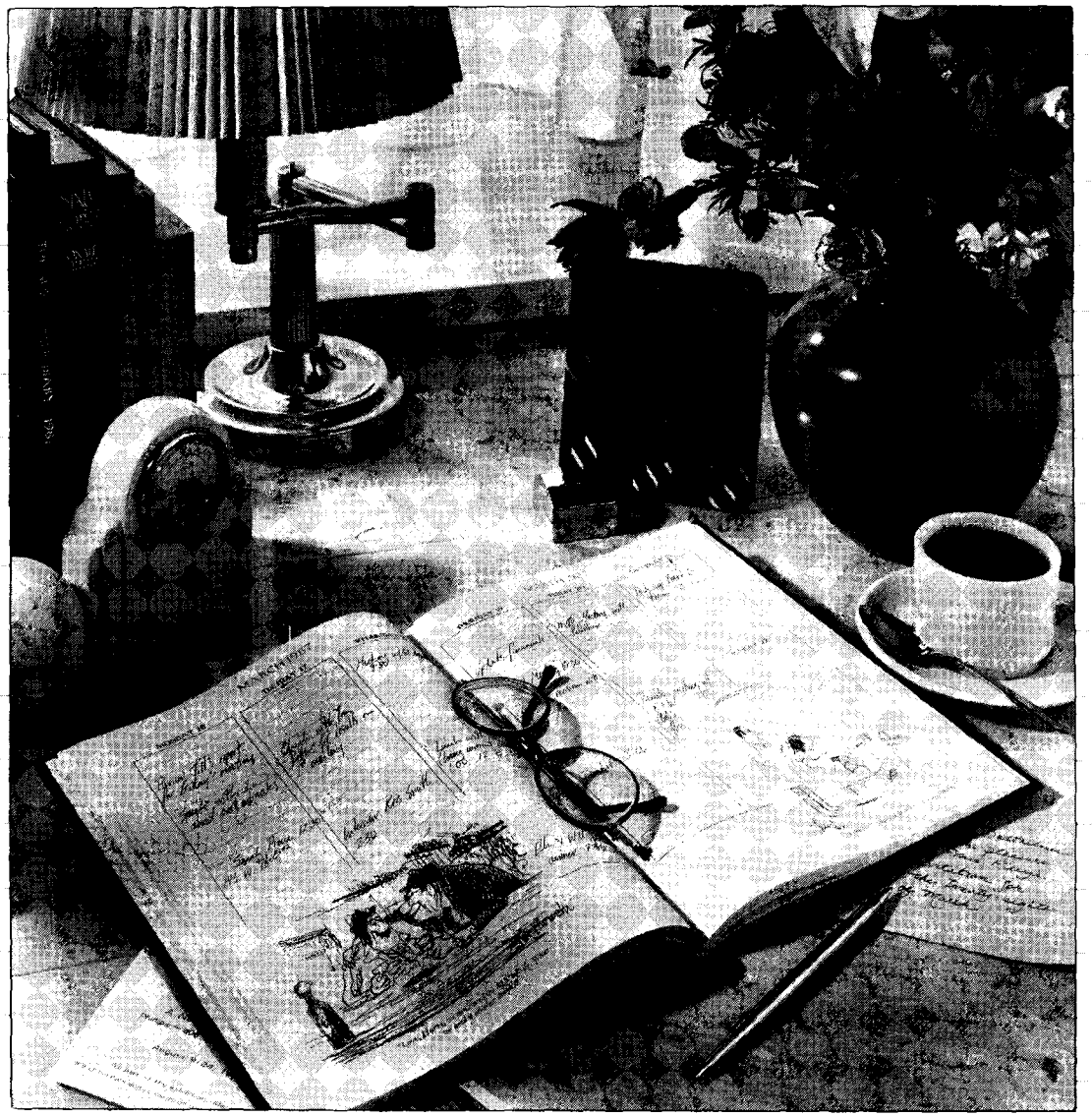

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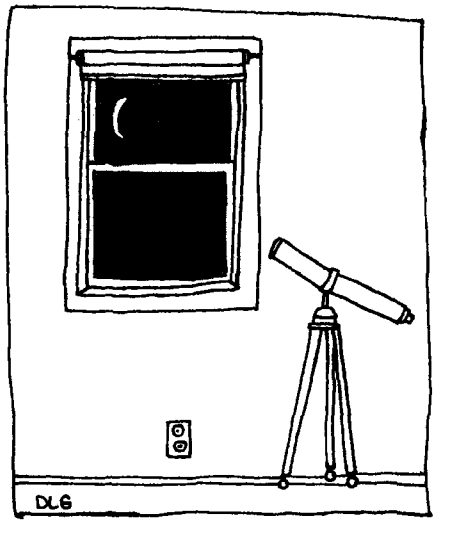
ham tarts are light in appearance and weight, and with a salad they would do for lunch or Sunday-night supper; $3 apiece. Succulent cabbage rolls, stuffed with well-seasoned veal (unnecessarily fancy, but apparently large numbers of people who buy takeout food don't like lamb), are $14 a pound. In the bakery, a crown-shaped whole-wheat-and-walnut loaf is $3.50, and an apple pie with a cheddar crust that is as good to eat as the filling comes in two sizes, for $6 and $18.50. A ten-inch Teddy bear (a cursory head count reveals that the Teddy-bear craze has not abated over the past year) made of sweet dough, with a shiny brown exterior, is $6. Mr. Laurence told us that there are plans afoot to make bread pudding, for a total nursery experience.

The English cheeses at Bloomingdale's are in perfect condition. Yarg, a white cheddarlike cheese from Cornwall, wrapped in nettle leaves, is $12 a pound. Stilton, marbled to the edge of the cheese and with a natural rind, is $7.99 a pound. Stilton is also obtainable in a small, unglazed Fulham crock. Only the heart of the cheese is used, and it would make a nice present; sixteen ounces for $35. A Shropshire blue, aged or young (the young is sweeter), is $8.99 a pound. An English goat cheese prompted Mr. Laurence to discuss American cheeses, both goat and cow. Bloomingdale's carries cheeses from a dozen small cheese farms. (There are somewhere between fifty and a hundred in the United States, and most of them seem to have goats.) Cheesemaking is still an inexact science, and goat cheese in this country is just not the same as in France. Surprisingly, French cheesemakers have been very coöperative, coming over to the United States to advise, and to suggest the right equipment. In one instance, mold from some curing caves in France was transported to this country and smeared on the curing-room walls, to no avail. Some French goat cheeses age well; most of ours do not. The reason the cheeses are dusted with vegetable ash is to keep flies from landing on them as they ripen. (Flies don't like the dark color.) Certain cheeses, such as Montrachet, are artificially processed—i.e., treated with ultraviolet—when the cheese is at its peak, to stop the ripening, thus insuring a longer life. We proceeded to sample too many goat cheeses, interspersed with bits of French bread and sips of water. Bearing in mind that we like the texture of goat cheese more than the flavor, here is the short version, without adjectives, of our preferences. Goat Folks: Fresh Chabi, $5.25; Pyramide, $4.50; Selles-sur-Cher, $6.25. Coach Farm: sticks, with herbs or pepper, $5.25; and wonderful yogurt, $1.20 for four ounces. (Coach Farm is owned by Miles Cahn, the former owner of Coach Leatherware, who went from leather goods in New York City to goat cheese in upstate New York eighteen months ago. He keeps a herd of three hundred and fifty goats, all of which have names. He has hired Marie-Claude Chaleix, cheese consultant extraordinaire, as his cheesemaker, and the business is off and away.) Crème fraîche (cow) isn't really a cheese, but Vermont Cheeses makes an excellent one; $4.50 a half pint. Bloomingdale's has several Swiss cheeses (cow), including Gruyère—young ($6 a pound) and aged ($6.25 a pound)—and Tête de Moine, a delicate, semi-hard cheese. The latter is usually eaten with the aid of a Girolle, a cunning device with an L-shaped knife and a handle like that of a coffee grinder which shaves thin curls off the outside of the cheese. The Tête de Moine is $9.95 a pound; the Girolle, is $35, but it can be used with other hard round cheeses, and is another reason for buying them. A pound of Swiss Vacherin, in perfect condition, is $20. Gribotte, a small French cheese from Anjou, rather like a Pont l'Êvêque, has recently appeared on the market, for around $6. (The name comes from the local patois *gribotter*, meaning *manger par petits morceaux*.) To eat with these cheeses, consider some American prosciutto (if that isn't an oxymoron) called prosciutto Daniele. It has been cured and aged in Pascoag, Rhode Island—said to have an atmosphere and climate similar to Udine, in northern Italy—then sold with the bone in to Bloomingdale's, where the bone is removed to facilitate slicing; $16 a pound. Corncob-smoked ham, from New Hampshire, is $8.50 a pound, sliced, and $65 for a whole one weighing ten to twelve pounds, with bone. A boned one is $75, and they can be shipped anywhere.



When Giorgio DeLuca, half of Dean & DeLuca, 121 Prince Street, was asked what the store's Christmas theme is to be this year, he replied, "Heavy traditional"—a comprehensive phrase that turned out to cover not only England but France, Italy, and the United States. A first-class Christmas dinner could be assembled from this store in under twenty minutes. To start, there is smoked trout from the Ducktrap River Fish Farm, in Maine; from six to eight ounces each, for $10 a pound. The loin of smoked tuna (from the same farm) is a yellowfin tuna cold-smoked over fruitwood and hardwood. It is moist without being oily or watery, has a distinct, unfishy flavor and a fine texture, and could easily supplant smoked salmon in the hearts of the faithful; $17.50 a pound. Another choice for a first course is the gravlax, sliced, with an authentic sauce; $28 a pound, and the sauce is included. (Even children like gravlax, as long as some wisenheimer doesn't tell them it's raw.) For a main course, there are all sorts of birds to choose from (including four kinds of duck), but this year Giorgio is pushing guinea fowl. They are raised in Canada on natural grain, have half the fat of chicken, and are not as gamy as squab. One bird weighs about 2.5 pounds and is enough for 2.5 people. Dressed with fresh herbs and olive oil, ready for roasting, they cost $8 a pound. The produce at Dean & DeLuca is of such high quality and is so seductively arranged that the customer is apt to end up wanting everything in sight, but serious thought should be given to the wild mushrooms (there are usually three or four kinds; $8.50 to $18 a pound) and to the Rose Fir potatoes, grown in California. They are shaped like bumpy sausages, have a thin skin and a firm, waxy texture, and are yellow. In England, they are known as Fir Apples; $2.95 a pound. For $8.50, one can buy a three-pound bag to send to a friend, who will certainly be surprised. For a cheese course, consider a Shropshire blue, bright orange with jade marbling, and very creamy; $7.50 a pound. Introbi-

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ola is a strong, creamy Italian cheese with a brine-washed rind, and it looks like a small gold brick; $6.50. There is a Gribotte ($4.30), and Gratte Paille, a safe, all-purpose cheese, rather like Explorateur. It has a bloomy rind, comes in a square log, and is guaranteed not to put anyone off; $11. For dessert, a cassis mousse, elegant in color, flavor, and texture, is $15 a pound. The children can have ice cream with chocolate sauce. Or there is an individual shredded-apple-almond-and-apricot tart that might please all ages (with the addition of some vanilla ice cream). It's thin, but nearly five inches across, and at the end of Christmas dinner one of them would do for two; $3. To finish off the feast, get some sugarplums, the size of large marbles. They are made of finely chopped prunes, figs, dates, currants, pistachio nuts, and almonds, with a dash of cognac, then rolled in sugar and put in fluted gold paper cups; seventy-five cents each. A chocolate basket six inches long, filled with shredded coconut, serves as a cushion for a chocolate Teddy bear, who is surrounded by red jelly beans and small chocolates covered in green foil; $25. (These baskets can be filled with adult confections as well.) Don't think that just because you've got Christmas dinner organized you have covered all the bases at D. & D. Perhaps there's nothing on hand for supper? Buy some frozen Fini Agnolotti—pasta shaped like half-moons and filled with halibut and smoked salmon. Giorgio says he persevered in getting Fini to do these, and they are a welcome addition to the pasta scene. Just boil and add butter; $3.40 for an eight-ounce package. This store always has three or four kinds of salad on hand. One of the best is a white-bean salad, with roasted garlic and potatoes, flavored with Tahitian vanilla (Tahitian vanilla is the *numero uno* vanilla these days), in a light rémoulade sauce; $7.50 a pound. The Thai salad (in takeout language, "Thai" and "Oriental" are interchangeable) is a mixture of eggplant, scallions, sesame, and ginger (but not too much), and costs $8.50 a pound. Some adult stocking presents, for quite a large stocking, are also to be had here. Bastarri peppers—red Spanish *piquillo* pimentos roasted over a wood fire—are soft and sweet, with a little bite to them; $9.90 for a twelve-ounce jar. (This works out to about fifty cents a section, but they're worth it.) A sixteen-ounce bag of tiny French lentils, the colors of lava, is $3.35. A twenty-one-ounce bottle of Postilion's Imperial All Mango Chutney—a compote, really—costs $14.20. (Giorgio says the flesh is "plump and suave.") An eight-ounce packet of rock-crystal sugar is $1.90, and guests have been known to eat it like candy. Three-quarters of a cup of a balsamic vinegar called Reggiano Tradizionale—highly touted by the management—is $28.70, but the packaging alone is worth $22.70: the bottle is in the shape of a small Gothic tower, topped with a cork and sealing wax, and comes in a gentian-violet box. Four different collections of seeds of European salad greens, a few of which we have heard of (mache and arugula) and many of which we haven't (Orfeo and mizuna), have been tested in United States soil. They come with a planting guide and cost $3.75 to $8.75. A tin of chocolate Bath Oliver biscuits (thin, plain, hard biscuits covered with chocolate), theoretically for a child's stocking, are suitable for grownups with a taste for simple pleasures; $8.75.

ANYONE not up to cooking Christmas dinner should go talk to Rémy Gautier, owner and chef of Table de France, 349 East 83rd Street, who, when he isn't out delivering or picking things up, can be found bent over the stove. M. Gautier knows how to cook; his food lives up to the prose on the menu, and his Christmas Eve menu would do just as well for Christmas dinner. As a first course, there is a choice of lobster bisque ($5.95 a pint), clear borscht ($5.25 a pint), roulade of salmon, hot or cold ($5.75 for half a pound), or paupiette of sole gourmandise, with white-wine sauce ($5.25). There is a choice of baby pheasant ($9.75) or rack of lamb with green peppers ($38; feeds two) for the main course. The baby pheasant, boned and stuffed with ground chicken and pheasant livers mixed with bits of apple sautéed and flambéed in Calvados, comes with a sauce of apples and Calvados. Vegetables include pommes Anna ($2.25 for an eighth of a pie), haricots verts ($6.50 for half a pound), and purée of celery root ($2.25 for half a pound). For dessert, there is a choice of a bûche or a very light apple soufflé with caramelized apples on top, served in a pool of crème anglaise with Calvados; $18 for either one, and each serves eight. The soufflé is a recipe from the Rothschild family, as is chicken Bois-Baudrans, a piquant chicken salad with blanched celery, scallions, and a zippy dressing. It's always available, and a half pound costs $3.75. Two of M. Gautier's tourtes are Picasso (ratatouille, scrambled eggs, and sautéed potatoes) and one made of leeks, potatoes, and ham, and either is ideal for a buffet; $15 for one that serves eight.

Table de France is geared to grownups with a bias toward French cooking. A Christmas dinner-to-go that would appeal to all ages is one from the Silver Palate, 274 Columbus Avenue (73rd). There are numerous choices, including cheese straws (eighty cents each), duck rillettes ($18 a crock), and American sturgeon black caviar ($36.50 for two ounces), but with drinks we would like the leek-and-Gruyère puff-pastry tartlets, which are small, unusual, and expensive; $1.70 apiece. The tomato-and-fennel soup is both subtle and smooth; $5.75 a pint. A perfectly baked ham, with a bourbon-and-brown-sugar glaze, is $63 for half a ham, $120 for a whole one. A refreshing beet-and-apple purée, in a lovely shade of pink, accompanies it; two servings for $7.25. Wild rice with toasted pecans costs $10.50 and serves two. For dessert, the Silver Palate has a chocolate Grand Marnier mousse (the Grand Marnier does not come through so loud and clear that it will spoil the mousse for anyone); $3.85 a portion.

Eli Zabar, proprietor and mastermind of E.A.T., 1064 Madison Avenue (81st), is not expending much thought on Christmas dinner, traditional or otherwise, although he will have a free-range turkey, cooked and stuffed with turkey liver (quite mild) and herbs, surrounded by roasted vegetables—a fourteen-pound turkey, with the vegetables, costs $100. He's got his mind on food for people who entertain in a big way. This year, he's concentrating on hors d'oeuvres, and has come up with some originals as well as some golden oldies. Baby grilled artichokes—tender, crisp, and oily—served warm with roasted shallots are $20 a pint; small rolls of jambon de Parme, filled with chopped white truffles and tarragon, are $60 a dozen; baby potato skins, deep-fried and filled with crème fraîche and Beluga caviar, are $640 a pound for the caviar (the crème fraîche and potato skins are

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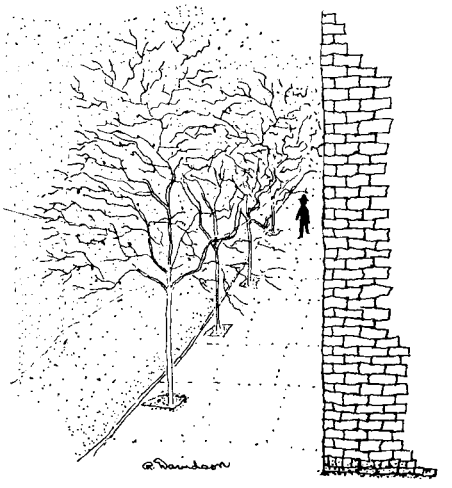
thrown in free); lobster feet (the ends of the claws) in a creamy dressing are $60 a pound; marble-size brioches filled with fresh crabmeat or lobster salad are $36 a dozen; eggplant slices grilled with balsamic vinegar and garlic are $20 a half pint. Eli insists that all of these can be eaten with the fingers, but unless the guests are wearing jeans and bibs, which at these prices is unlikely, plates, forks, and large napkins are in order for everything except the brioches. His crusty, chewy ficelles now come in five-inch logs, and could be used as pushers; $1.50. The long baguette sandwiches, split and sold by the inch, are for the young at heart: they have to be eaten with the fingers. There are several different fillings, and all of these sandwiches cost $1 an inch, including the smoked salmon. Also new are three hearty peasant cheeses—Fromage des Pyrénées (firm, strong), Brebis (made from sheep's milk, and very white, nutty, and creamy), and Tomme de Savoie (buttery and mild); each $15 a pound. For dessert, he is offering a Christmas pie that consists of a chocolate-crumb crust filled with black and white chocolate for a sort of *faux-marbre* effect. The pie is nine inches in diameter but is so rich that it would serve twenty; $40. The four Christmas bûches (really rolls, as in "chocolate roll") come in lemon, chocolate, white cake with chocolate mousse, and a superb date-and-nut with cream cheese and cream, only faintly reminiscent of Chock Full O'Nuts; $15 a pound. A poached pear with caramel sauce is $7.50. The triumphs are his fruit pizzas, of tissue-paper-thin bread dough topped with pear, apple, or two kinds of plum, to be eaten with or without crème fraîche; $15 a strip, and these pizzas have to be cut with scissors. His loaves of crumbly cake—apple or orange—would be a treat for breakfast, or perhaps tea, and are twice as good as what most people's mothers make; $15 a pound.

Bierman & Carrington, caterers, at 348 East 66th Street, has a delectable brown-sugar-and-pecan coffee cake, and also a glazed orange pound cake (with the zest); $8 for the coffee cake (which weighs a pound), and $4 for the orange cake (ten ounces). The orange cake is even better toasted. Cheddar-cheese moons, to be served with drinks, are nearly as good cold as they are hot; $3.50 for a quarter of a pound, which is about thirty moons. Everything from this kitchen reflects a care and attention more often found in the home. Telephone: (212) 249-4594, and one day's notice, please.

Neuman & Bogdonoff, 1385 Third Avenue (79th), which makes first-rate soups both plain (mushroom-barley, for $4 a pint) and fancy (oyster stew, for $6), has come up with yet another winner: an expertly seasoned pumpkin soup that's neither too sweet nor too thick; $4.50. Some new additions to its takeout foods are crab cakes ($3.50 each), lobster potpie ($15 a portion and enough for two), and shepherd's pie ($9 a portion, and made with untraditional veal rather than lamb). The potpies can be delivered finished, or partly cooked; Paul Neuman recommends the latter. A portion of paella, with lobster, three shrimp, quite a few scallops, one clam, one mussel, seventeen peas, red peppers, and saffron rice, is $15, and is terrific. The crème brûlée here is the genuine article, and a small container costs $2. (If the purchaser's own ramekins are used, the price is $2.50, unless they're noticeably larger.) A poached stuffed pear *en croûte*, with the *croûte* spiralled around the pear, is served hot, with an eggnog sauce, and is a joy to gaze upon, but is perhaps too big for one person; $4. A reminder: the gently listing chocolate-soufflé cake here, one of the best desserts in town, has been such a success that it's now made in three sizes—small, medium, and large, for $5, $10, and $20.

THOSE who are planning to entertain on a grand scale, or even on a small scale, should immediately note the following name in their address books: D'Artagnan. It's the name of a firm in Jersey City run by two young entrepreneurs, Ariane Daguin (from Gascony) and George Faison (from Texas). Their specialty is birds and exotic fauna, which they supply to people as well as to restaurants. Name it, they have everything (except blackbirds)—large and small, boned and unboned, male and female, smoked and unsmoked. They deliver to your door in Manhattan, and ship overnight, elsewhere, by U.P.S. (No checks, but you can charge everything to your credit card.) Four small quail are $6; four not quite so small quail are $7. Wild turkey—which has more flavor than tame turkey, without being gamy—is $6.50 a pound, and a three-pound free-range chicken is $12. Those who are tired of birds may want to go for the venison, buffalo, suckling pig, kid goat, or rabbit. This firm also has sausages and confits, and duck foie gras from the Catskills, either raw ($45 a pound for prime) or cooked in sauterne ($70 a pound) or cooked but *not* in sauterne ($65). Give twenty-four hours' notice. Telephone: 1-800-DARTAGNAN (that's right, nine digits); for New Jersey residents, (201) 792-0748.



For Christmas treats, the Shell Lobster Corporation, 412 West 13th Street, is a place to keep in mind. The lobsters come in all sizes, with one or two claws. Prices (per pound) are $4.79 for a small, $5.79 for a medium, $6.79 for a large (one and three-quarter to two and three-quarter pounds), $5.79 for a jumbo (up to six pounds), and $4.79 for a superjumbo (up to twenty pounds). The jumbos and superjumbos are cheaper than the large because so few people have pots big enough to cook them in. The one-claw models are a dollar cheaper in each category. All tails, of all sizes—frozen (South African) or fresh steamed (Maine)—are $10.95 a pound; claws (cooked) are $2.99 a pound; a pound of fresh steamed lobster meat is $14.95. Shell Lobster carries a full line of other marine creatures—such as uncooked large shrimp, for $8.95 a pound.

While you're in the postal zone, walk south to Dufour Pastry Kitchens, 808 Washington Street (Horatio). This firm continues to turn out excellent puff pastry with savory or sweet fillings, baked, or frozen and ready to bake. It has added three-inch tart shells to its repertory. One is a combination of cheddar, poppy seeds, and spices, and the other is chocolate that is not too sweet. These are sold in sets of six, for $3. A supply in the freezer to have with leftovers (in the case of the savory shells) or for desserts (in the case of the chocolate ones) would reassure the cook. Also new are puff-pastry sandwiches made with marga-

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rine (so the cholesterol is zilch) and filled with either smoked salmon or tuna melt or chili with fresh vegetables; $1.75 frozen, $2.25 baked (to order only). This place has come up with a wonderful new filling for its logs: smoked brook trout with horseradish and dill. Other fillings include duxelles, fennel purée, and chèvre-and-artichoke. The logs are a little over a foot long; they can be sliced thin while they are still semi-frozen, and then baked on a cookie sheet; $5.75 frozen (directions for baking are included), $7 baked (to order only). Telephone: (212) 929-2800. Two blocks away is Myers of Keswick, 634 Hudson Street (Horatio), the store with the unreconstructed English look and comestibles. The peppered mackerel fillets come in packs, for $5.75 a pound. Individual steak-and-mushroom pies are $2.25, and the Scotch eggs are $1.75. All three are quintessentially English, and best of breed.

Some hors d'oeuvres with substance and excellent flavor are to be found at Priscilla's, 35 Jane Street. Among hot Brazilian appetizers, there are codfish balls, shrimp balls with coriander (both ninety-five cents apiece), and shrimp croquettes in a long shape ($1.45 apiece). Three of any of these, with salad, would make a lunch, and platters of them would be good for one of those open-house parties people are apt to give at this time of year. A Victorian tart consisting of a short crust filled with chocolate and cream, with a candied violet in the center, is $8.50 for a six-inch cake, $12.50 for a nine-inch. A small Dundee fruitcake, made from a Scottish recipe, is so good that there is no danger of its being handed on from year to year. The fewer bright-red or bright-green things there are in a fruitcake, the nearer it is to the Kingdom of Heaven, and this has none; $6.50 for a small loaf.

William Poll, 1051 Lexington Avenue (75th), has a few boons for the frantic hostess. The cheese straws here are the only ones we've found that are made of puff pastry. They are crisp, light, buttery, and chewy, and cost $30 a pound, with about forty in a pound. The frozen "pistolets" (petit petit pains) are the right size to be folded in a napkin at a dinner party or piled up for a buffet. They are bland, in the manner of Parker House rolls, but hard, and should be served warm if possible; forty cents each. There is a wide assortment of sweets, for $30 a pound—macadamia rolls with powdered sugar, macaroons, chewy brownies (more cake than fudge)—but the stars are the meringues, which come plain or with flavorings such as orange, lemon, raspberry, and cocoa. The flavored ones are faintly colored, and a bowl of these with some fruit ice or ice cream would take care of dessert for a great many people.

The limos continue to line up outside Grace Balducci's Marketplace, 1237 Third Avenue (71st), and the customers to line up inside—testimony to the quality and variety of the provisions, and especially to the genial service (in the presence of sometimes ungenial customers). There is an enormous amount of choice, but in all the cheerful hustle and bustle there are three modest items that should not be overlooked: loaves of unsliced sandwich bread are $2 each; some cookies called Destrooper Butter Waffles, which are among the best packaged cookies going, are $2.19 a box; steamed, unpeeled medium shrimp are perfectly cooked—that is to say, tender—and are $10 a pound.

Good Taste, 198 Henry Street, in Brooklyn Heights, can do no wrong. The soups, meats, salads, and desserts are a blend of traditional food and imagination, and they taste good besides. The onion soup with Stilton cheese (melted) is so smooth and nourishing that it's a meal in itself (well, a lunch in itself). The wild-rice-and-vegetable soup is equally satisfying. Each is $8 a quart, or $2.25 a serving. The salads—shrimp rémoulade with capers; chicken with tarragon and hazelnuts; whole-wheat berry, ginger, scallion, and tomato; fennel, mushroom, and red pepper; chopped cabbage with watercress, radishes, and horseradish; beef and snow peas with sesame; roasted peppers in three colors, baby eggplant, and whole garlic—range in price from $3.50 to $9.50 for half a pound. Veal breast stuffed with spinach and pine nuts is $7.50 a pound. A dried-fruit-and-nut conserve that is a beautiful plum color is $5 a pint, and is intended as a condiment, but it would be good on yogurt. On a par with Neuman & Bogdonoff's chocolate-soufflé cake is the Dacquoise

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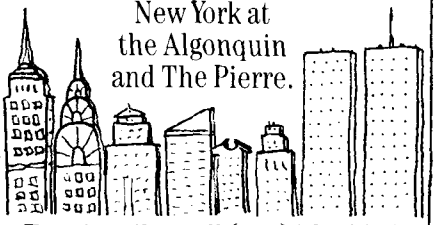

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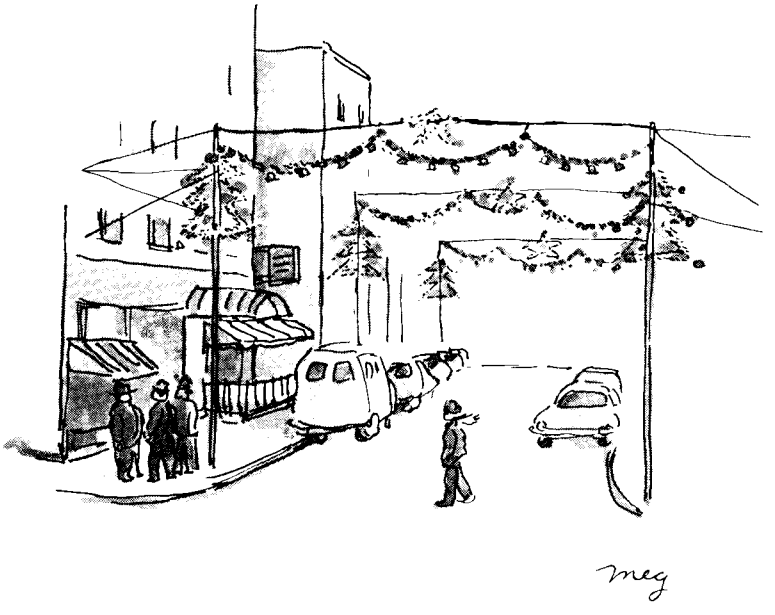
almond cake here. The word "Dacquoise" is tossed around pretty freely these days, but this is the real McCoy—light, crunchy, and beautiful to look at. It also comes in pecan, lemon, chocolate, and coffee; $15 for one to serve eight to ten, or $1.50 a slice. A superb fruitcake, made with dates, figs, prunes, currants, golden raisins, apricots, Virginia Gentleman bourbon, pecans, almonds, and NO CHERRIES OR GREEN THINGS, is $7.25.

Our definition of an exceptionally good takeout store is one that's worth going to even though it's more than twenty blocks away. Something's Cooking, 210 West 10th Street, is such a store. It opened last month, and carries savories and soups, three house pâtés, seafood, poultry, pasta, veggies, and desserts. There was no way we could taste everything, but here's what we liked of the things we did sample: puff pastry with a meat or mushroom filling ($1.75); a very lightly fried veal or chicken patty ($2.50); eggplant caviar ($7.50 a pound); frutti di mare salad, with shrimp, scallops, mussels, and calamari ($21 a pound); fusilli with walnut "pesto" sauce ($8 a pound); grilled zucchini in chimichurri sauce, which is a hot, Argentinian parsley sauce ($9 a pound)—although it's hard to believe that anything new could be done to zucchini. A light cheesecake with a pleasing texture and flavor is $3 a slice, and a flourless chocolate cake the diameter of a fifty-cent piece, in a fluted gold cup, called Chocolate Decadence, is $1.

American cheeses have come a long way in the past few years—particularly the goat cheeses, as we've noted—but the most encouraging news is from Hawthorne Valley Farm, in Harlemville, New York, where a man named Tom Myers makes four cheeses that could pass for French in a blindfold test. (He went to France to learn about cheesemaking.) He makes an Emmenthal, a raclette, a Gruyère, and a soft, ripened, Vacherin-type cheese called Taghkanic. Each has a distinct flavor and texture, and all are sold at Lambert's Pasta & Cheese, for $6 a pound, and, on Wednesdays and Saturdays, at the Union Square Greenmarket. Also noteworthy at Pasta & Cheese are the saucissons Rapelli, from California out of Switzerland out of Italy. There are three kinds—Beaujolais with nuts, herbes de Provence, and green peppercorns—and they are all $8.75 a pound. Extra-lean corned beef is $8.50 a pound. Downey's small, boozy cakes are packaged in plastic bundt molds, and there are three flavors—Amaretto, Irish whiskey, and Kahlua; $3.95 for four ounces. We liked Kahlua the best. Fresh herbs come in individual packets, as bouquets (such as bouquet for salad and bouquet for pasta) and separately (dill, basil, sorrel, and so on), for $1.25 to $1.95 a packet.

Fourteen ounces of Beluga caviar is $219.95 at Macy's; Zabar's has it for $229—at the moment. The Chinese caviar at Macy's is now called Mandarin Beluga, and fourteen ounces costs $169.95. Last year, it was called Keluga, and had a musty flavor, so the distributors, "accompanied by eleven university-trained quality control inspectors," have since "spent two months in Manchuria creating this exquisite caviar" (California Sunshine Fine Foods news release). Macy's own-label vinegar and olive oil with herbs from Provence come in handsome black ceramic bottles; three-quarters of a litre of vinegar is $17.50, and a litre of oil is $23. Lairds Irish preserves—we mention them simply because they are the only Irish preserves we've run into—are $2.25 or $2.50 for a twelve-ounce jar. There is a choice of fruits—strawberry, raspberry, and gooseberry among them. La Tablita, 65 West 73rd Street, has a chimichurri sauce that no household should be without: it's made with lots of parsley, garlic, hot pepper, basil, oil, and vinegar. It is traditionally served with *parrillada* (Argentinian mixed grill), but it's good on anything except ice cream; $7.95 for a half litre.



THE high-class-candy scene is completely out of hand. There are Belgian chocs, French chocs, Swiss chocs, American chocs, all hand-tempered and handmade of the very finest chocolate and flown in every week, but unless they are filled with something noticeably disagreeable they all begin to taste pretty much the same. Most of the shops resemble perfume boutiques (hushed atmosphere, reverent display), with the noteworthy exception of the Galerie au Chocolat, Madison Avenue at 56th, in the A.T. & T. Building. The front wall is glass, and half the back wall is devoted to jelly beans in large glass compartments. There are only sixty flavors, because they haven't room to display all seventy-two that they carry; the effect is dazzling—like a particularly cheerful piece of Pop art. The jelly beans cost $4.75 a pound, and a small stainless-steel scoop is provided with every pound. Besides jelly beans, there are truffles, chocolate-covered toffee-and-caramel mushrooms, chocolate-covered coffee beans, foil-covered chocolate sardines, and lemon and orange peel covered in rough chocolate bark. All the chocolates are French except the truffles, which are Belgian, and most of them cost $30 a pound. We were especially drawn to the pistoles menthes and the monnaie du Pape (made of bitter chocolate), both of them very thin, uneven rounds about the size of a silver dollar, with bevelled edges. They come by the sheet for $6 (two dozen to a sheet), or by the pound.

Galerie au Chocolat has branches in Versailles and several other garden spots. Normandie Chocolat is quite a different operation—an embryonic cottage industry that makes bespoke chocolates, and nothing is flown in from anywhere. Frederic and Angela Covo are a young husband-and-

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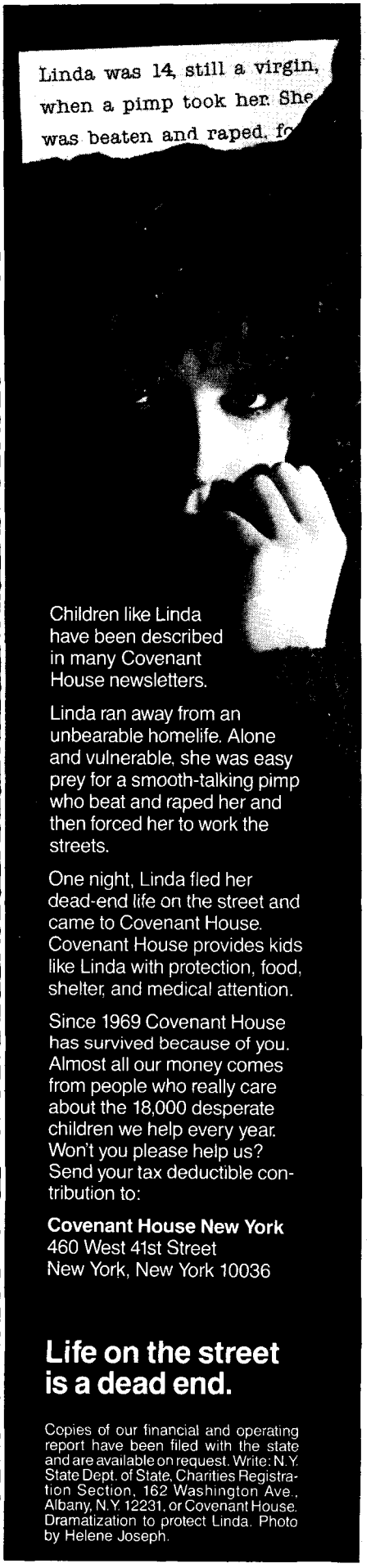
wife team: Freddie makes truffles, Angela makes solid-chocolate cats and ships. The truffles are small squares that not only are homemade but look homemade—no preservatives or additives—and have a shelf life of four to six weeks (although truffles by nature are best eaten within a week). There are six different flavors: Grand Marnier, mocha, orange, almond, mint, and milk chocolate, each decorated to indicate the flavor. The Grand Marnier, for example, is sprinkled with powdered sugar, the mocha has a coffee bean on top, the orange will have an orange slice when Freddie finds some that are good enough (he used to candy his own peels but hasn't time right now); $22 a pound. The cats (sassy) and the ships (Art-Deco Normandies) are made of dark, white, or milk chocolate. The cats are three inches high and are packaged in pairs, tied back-to-back, each cat wrapped in foil; $1.25 for twins. The six-inch Normandie is $10; a pair of three-inch ones is $1. For a minimum order of $22, the Covos will deliver chocolates to your door. Telephone: (212) 289-7404.

Foucher, 789 Lexington Avenue (61st), has four varieties of caramels—vanilla, chocolate, coffee, and almond. They are individually wrapped in gold or bronze foil; $23.75 a pound. The shop's dragées (coated almonds for ceremonial occasions, such as christenings) come in the usual pale pink and white, but the best are coffee-colored; their almonds have been roasted with coffee. Bloomingdale's has tiny artificial Christmas trees in foiled-wrapped chocolate pots, for the Christmas table; a box of six costs $12.

For nuts, dried fruit, and non-designer candy in quantity, go to J. Wolsk & Co., 81 Ludlow Street (between Delancey and Broome). Everything is about half the price it is uptown. The people here roast ten thousand pounds of nuts a week, and the only nuts they do not carry are chestnuts. A pound of walnuts in the shell is $1.29; shelled pecans, $4.50; macadamias, $7.98; cashews (roasted), $4.50; a five-pound bag of pistachios, $18. They have every kind of dried and candied fruit. Australian glazed apricots are $4.20 a pound. A quarter pound of chocolate twigs is $2.98; chocolate-covered espresso beans are $4.98 a pound. Chocolate-covered and cocoa-dusted almonds are $3.98 a pound. A pound of Tootsie Rolls is $1.49.

Everyone who frequents the eastern end of Long Island (specifically, Southampton) seems to know about the cookies, breads, and pies produced by Kathleen's Cookie, which has recently opened a sparkling, neat branch, called Kathleen's Bake Shop, at 155 East 84th Street. Although we were unable to eat our way through the entire list, Kathleen's reputation for baked goods of high quality was borne out by everything we did taste. (Among other things, the all-important pinch of salt is added to the sweet batters.) Her cookies are for cookie jars, not for fancy tea parties, and we would secure a half pound of shortbread, some oatmeal-raisin cookies, and some brownies for the jar. Among the special Christmas cookies, the small, plump, chewy gingerbread men and the butterballs are outstanding. All the cookies are $3.50 for half a pound; the brownies are $1 (plain) or $1.10 (with nuts) apiece. The Christmas cookies can also be bought for $5 a half-pound tin, and $30 a platter (almost three pounds). This shop makes seven or eight kinds of pie, but we were so taken with the apple crumb—a happy cross between apple pie and Brown Betty—that we were unable to move on to the others; $12.50 for the nine-inch, $4.50 for the six-inch. There are a couple of imports here that should not be overlooked: Crutchley's doughnut holes (sixteen for $3), which come with a bag of powdered sugar; and petit pains, from a bakery that bakes three times a day. Kathleen's gets the midday bake; thirty-five cents apiece.

Sarabeth's Kitchen, 423 Amsterdam Avenue (80th) and 1295 Madison Avenue (92nd), will have—besides a perfect crème brûlée for $5 (with a refund of $1.50 if the ramekin is returned)—eight different kinds of miniature cookies in assorted Christmas-cookie containers: boxes, jars, tins, and bags. Gingerbread children, shortbread children, brownies, Christmas-tree sugar cookies—every cookie it offers for the holidays will be made in small sizes for the containers. A large tin is $30, a small one $18. Priscilla's has Christmas cookies in various Christmas shapes for fifty cents apiece. Christel Reddi, who no longer has her takeout shop but works at home, is making four kinds of cookies this year: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Dramatization to protect Linda. Photo by Helene Joseph.

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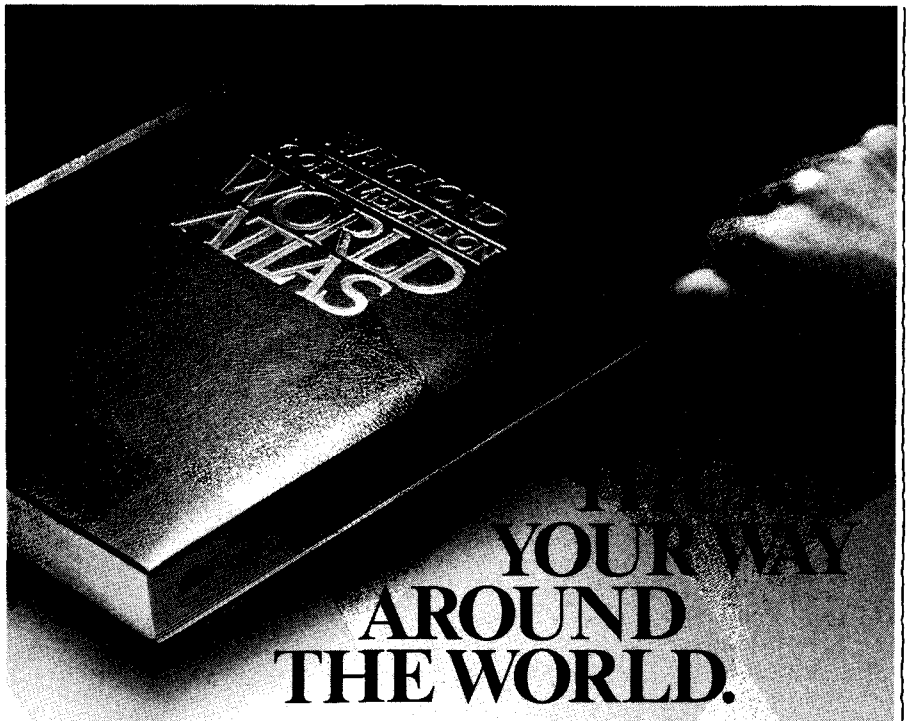

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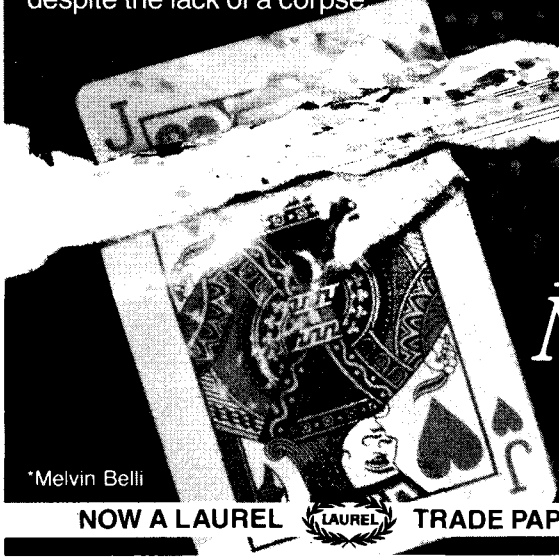

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lemon, almond crescents, hazelnut, and pecan sticks. They are delicate and delicious; $6 for half a pound. Telephone: (212) 348-8662. With twenty-four hours' notice, she will deliver two pounds' worth or more in Manhattan. Anyone away at school would appreciate a present from Hill Street Brownies, 190 Willow Avenue, in the Bronx. The company not only makes brownies in thirteen different flavors but runs a Brownie-of-the-Month Club. The three-month deal is the best, because it avoids such unfavorites as rum-raisin and raspberry. The brownies are dark and fudgy—and good. The original is made with walnuts; the chocolate-chip and the pecan are self-explanatory; there is also a no-nut and a bittersweet. A three-month contract for Brownie Bites (very large bites) is $37.50, plus delivery charges, and would cheer many a scholar during Jan.-Feb.-Mar. Telephone: (212) 402-8855.

The Morgan Library, 29 East 36th Street, is selling tins of Morgan Blend tea, which the tea-and-coffee firm of Simpson & Vail concocted for J. P. Morgan many, many years ago, and which Mr. Morgan used to give to his friends at Christmas. It's a blend of Lapsang, China Black, two Ceylons, Kheemun, Darjeeling, and bergamot oil (the distinctive flavor in Earl Grey), and it's a strong, complex tea; $13.95 for half a pound, in a tin done up to look like the Morgan Library. At the same place, for $4.50, you can buy John Julius Norwich's 1986 "Christmas Cracker," the commonplace book that he puts together and gives to *his* friends at Christmastime, which can now be bought in various shops by anyone not on his list. The Cracker has a red paper cover and, as usual, contains twenty-four pages of whatever appeals to Lord Norwich's idiosyncratic tastes. It takes the same amount of time to read the Cracker as it does to drink a cup of Morgan Blend. Put up your feet and take some time out. Merry Christmas!

•

INCENDIARY NOTES FROM ALL OVER

[*From the Fire Log of the Walpole (Mass.) Times*]

Tuesday, Oct. 28

2:03 a.m. box 333, Super 8 Motel, Rte. 1, someone burned a Red Sox cap in room.

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NO COMMENT DEPARTMENT

[*From the Times Index*]

PEACE. See War and Revolution

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AMERICAN CHRONICLES

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JOE BOB BRIGGS, SO FAR

THE problem was how to deal with trashy movies. It's a common problem among movie reviewers. What, exactly, does the film critic of a main-line American daily newspaper do about movies like "The Night Evelyn Came Out of the Grave" and "Malibu Hot Summer" and "Bloodsucking Freaks"? Does he pick one out, on a slow week, and subject it to the sort of withering sarcasm that sometimes, in his braver daydreams, he sees himself using on the executive editor? Does he simply ignore such movies, preferring to pretend that a person of his sensibilities could not share an artistic universe with such efforts as "Mother Riley Meets the Vampire" and "Driller Killer" and "Gas Pump Girls"?

The Dallas *Times Herald* had that problem, and in late 1981 it seemed to have more or less stumbled onto a solution. The assistant managing editor for features, Ron Smith, had asked the movie reviewer, a young man named John Bloom, to look into the question of why drive-in movie theatres, which were folding in most places, still thrived in patches of the country that included the area around Dallas. Bloom came back with a proposal: He could review the sort of movies that play in Texas drive-ins—they are sometimes called exploitation movies—through the persona of a fictional drive-in customer who was actually able to distinguish between a successful zombie-surfing movie and a zombie-surfing movie that didn't quite work. "I had been thinking about doing a column from someone with a personality that is completely opposite of what we think is tasteful," Bloom recalled not long ago. "I had been saying to Ron, 'What would happen if a movie critic loved "I Spit on Your Grave" and hated "Dumbo"? What if this guy suddenly had an aesthetic revelation and started looking at Charles Bronson as an *auteur*?' "

Bloom first suggested a reviewer named Bobo Rodriguez. He envisioned Bobo as a "kind of all-purpose ethnic, like Andy Kaufman's foreigner: you don't know what nationality he is but he's quintessentially foreign." Smith rejected Bobo Rodriguez as a character Dallas minorities were bound to find offensive no matter how many times they were assured that the real target was pretentious film criticism or respectable Anglo moviegoers. The character Bloom came up with instead was a young redneck he called Joe Bob Briggs. Smith liked that idea. He decided to give Joe Bob some space in the back pages of *Weekend*, the paper's Friday entertainment tabloid—a low-priority operation that was generally avoided by reporters and was probably best known to readers as the part of the *Times Herald* most likely to come off on your hands. In January of 1982, the *Times Herald* ran Joe Bob Briggs' first movie review, under the heading "Joe Bob Goes to the Drive-In." The movie being considered was "The Grim Reaper," in which the title character "likes to kill people and then chew on them for a while." Joe Bob liked it.

In an accompanying piece introducing his new colleague to the readers of the *Times Herald*, John Bloom said he had met Joe Bob at the snack bar of the Century Drive-In, in Grand Prairie, Texas, during an all-night Bela Lugosi marathon. According to Bloom, Joe Bob was, at nineteen, a drive-in authority of enormous experience: he had seen sixty-eight hundred drive-in movies, and had still found time for at least three marriages. Experience had not brought a strong sense of responsibility. Only a month or so after the column began—a month during which John Bloom found a Brazilian film called "Pixote" to be "powerful" and "unsettling," and Joe Bob praised not only "Mad Monkey Kung Fu" ("We're talking serious chopsocky here") but a snake-bite horror movie that his girlfriend of the moment, May Ellen Masters, refused to watch with her eyes open—the new columnist disap-

"It's another day, Phil. Planning to suit up?"

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peared. (Bloom had taken some vacation time.) Bloom finally reported that he had found Joe Bob—in jail, in Bossier City, Louisiana. Joe Bob had been arrested for beating up an auto mechanic named Gus Simpson, who not only had sold Joe Bob's baby-blue Dodge Dart for parts to Junior Stebbens, of Mineral Wells, but also had been discovered by Joe Bob with the perfidious May Ellen Masters in a room at the Have-A-Ball Tourist Courts. By that time, it was clear from the volume of inquiries about Joe Bob's whereabouts that "Joe Bob Goes to the Drive-In," which Smith had envisioned as an occasional feature, or maybe even a onetime event, had become a Friday staple of the *Times Herald*.

Eventually, Bloom's authorship became a sort of open secret in the Dallas newspaper world, but for the better part of a year it was a real secret even from the people who worked in the *Times Herald* newsroom. A lot of readers believed that the Joe Bob Briggs column was in fact written by a nineteen-year-old redneck who had seen sixty-eight hundred drive-in movies. "They bought that," Ron Smith said recently, sounding amazed as he recalled it. "There were people on this staff—serious newspaper people—who bought that." Many of those who finally became suspicious, of course, settled their suspicions on John Bloom. He was, after all, the only person on the paper who claimed to have met Joe Bob. He was the movie reviewer. His initials were similar to Joe Bob's initials. Close readers might have even noticed that when Bloom wrote about Joe Bob in those first weeks of shepherding the column into the paper he fell into rather Joe Bobbian phrasing himself—as when he wrote that Joe Bob's adventures around Bossier City had left his head looking like "the inside of a Big Mac after it's been left on the dashboard three or four days," or when he wrote that Joe Bob's previous car had been ruined at the Ark-La-Tex Twin "when a dough-head in a Barracuda crunched his rear door and scared Dede Wilks half out of her halter top." Bloom's basic defense against the accusations of authorship was that he could hardly have been less like Joe Bob. A soft-spoken, reserved, almost withdrawn young man who had graduated with honors from Vanderbilt, Bloom drove a Toyota instead of a baby-blue 1968 Dodge Dart. He spoke with a trace of Southwestern accent, but it would have been difficult to imagine him using Joe Bobbisms like "He don't give a diddly" or expressing his admiration for an actress by saying, "Bootsie is not just another humongous set of garbanzas." An admirer of foreign films, Bloom wrote essays on the *nouvelle vague* while Joe Bob was rating movies according to the amount of innards displayed ("We're talking Glopola City") and the number of severed body parts that can be seen rolling away and the number of breasts exposed ("the garbanza department").

Bloom wanted Joe Bob to "talk about movies the way most people talk about movies: they give the plot, with emphasis on their favorite scenes, then they sum up what they think of it." Joe Bob tended to tell the plot ("So this flick starts off with a bimbo getting chained up and killed by a bunch of Meskins dressed up like Roman soldiers in their bathrobes"), and his summaries eventually developed into his best-known trademark: "Sixty-four dead bodies. Bimbos in cages. Bimbos in chains. Arms roll. Thirty-nine breasts. Two beasts (giant lizard, octopus). Leprosy. Kung fu. Bimbo fu. Sword fu. Lizard fu. Knife fu. Seven battles. Three quarts blood. A 39 on the vomit meter . . . Joe Bob says check it out."

What some readers wondered about such material was not who was writing it but how it got into the newspaper. The short answer was that it was sneaked in. Ron Smith and Bloom, playing around with ways to handle a section of the paper that even the editors didn't read very closely, hadn't taken the Joe Bob gimmick seriously enough as a long-term proposition to consult any of the sort of editors Joe Bob began referring to in print as high sheriffs. If a gathering of top editors had been presented with a formal plan to run a truly tasteless weekly column by a fictional trash-movie fanatic, Joe Bob Briggs would presumably have gone the way of Bobo Rodriguez. The Dallas *Times Herald* was a lively newspaper, but even lively newspapers are cautious institutions. As it was, the Joe Bob column impressed itself on the consciousness of the paper's principal editors after it had begun gaining a foothold with the readers. Not long after that, it became apparent that "Joe Bob Goes to the Drive-In" was on its way to becoming the most talked-about feature in the paper. "You can't imagine what incredible appeal it had in those early months," someone who was at the *Times Herald* at the time said recently. "When the Friday paper came out, everyone in the newsroom stopped whatever he was doing to turn to *Weekend* and find out what outrage Joe Bob was perpetrating now." The same thing was happening all over town. Friday was Joe Bob Day among young professional people who worked in the shiny new office buildings of downtown Dallas. Friday was also Joe Bob Day among folks who, in the words of one *Times Herald* reporter, "were grateful that there was finally someone in the paper who wrote normal."

The top editors of the *Times Herald* were constantly being reassured that the perpetration of outrages was all right. It was satire, they were told; it was not really written by some crazed redneck, after all, but by the thoughtful and enlightened John Bloom. But they were still uneasy about running Joe Bob's column. Daily newspapers have never been comfortable with satire. Daily newspapers have never been comfortable with columnists who perpetrate outrages. Then, in November of 1982, the *Wall Street Journal* ran a long front-page story by G. Christian Hill headlined "AFICIONADO OF TRASH AT THE TIMES HERALD IS A BIG HIT IN DALLAS." The *Journal* piece conferred an almost instant legitimacy on "Joe Bob Goes to the Drive-In." The high sheriffs at the *Times Herald* breathed easier. The Los Angeles Times Syndicate—whose parent company, the Times Mirror Company, owned the Dallas *Times Herald*—offered Joe Bob a syndication contract. A young woman who had met Bloom through handling the advertising for some Dallas exploitation-movie distributors became a literary agent on the spot, and sent a Joe Bob Briggs book proposal to fifty editors whose names she got out of a guide to the publishing industry. Joe Bob wrote the proposal's covering letter himself. Since it was important correspondence, he used his special stationery—the stuff decorated with reproductions of movie posters for drive-in classics like "Doctor Butcher, M.D." and "The Slumber Party Massacre" and "Vampire Playgirls."

The letter began, "Dear Big Shot Publisher: Cherry Dilday is typing this sucker up for me, so if we got technical problems, I'm telling you right now, I'm not responsible. Cherry claims she got a typing diploma from

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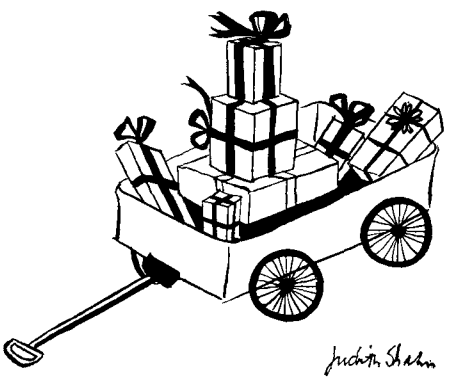
the Industrial Trades Institute on Harry Hines Boulevard, but I know for a fact that she left school after two weeks to go to the dog track in West Memphis with Dexter Crook. She'd probly amount to something today if she'd stayed for the full three. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I've been told you're interested in getting filthy rich off my book." Several of them were. Joe Bob signed a contract with Dell.

AMONG large American cities, Dallas has had a reputation for being run, rather smoothly, by an oligarchy. While other cities of the Old Confederacy were battling over the demands of the civil-rights movement, for instance, whatever desegregation could not be avoided in Dallas was arranged quietly from above by a group of conservative white businessmen called the Dallas Citizens Council—a fact often mentioned to explain why Dallas's black community has been slow to develop aggressive and independent leaders of its own. The Citizens Council also installed slates of city councilmen. Jim Schutze, who does an urban-affairs column for the *Times Herald*, has written that until 1978, when city councilmen began being elected in single-member districts instead of at large, Dallas was, in effect, a "well-run predemocratic city-state." The oligarchy's newspaper was the Dallas *Morning News*—an appropriately sober, locally owned, journalistically conservative paper, whose editorial page is even now described occasionally as Dixiecrat. Until a dozen years ago, the *Morning News* dominated the Dallas newspaper market. Its competition, the Dallas *Times Herald*, was an afternoon paper that had a smaller circulation and carried advertising that ran more toward K mart than toward Neiman-Marcus. Like a lot of afternoon papers, the *Times Herald* concentrated on local coverage—particularly the juicier murders. The joke names for the two papers in Dallas were the *Morning Snooze* and the *Crimes Herald*.

In the middle seventies, all that changed. The Times Mirror Company—a huge, expansionist communications corporation whose empire includes the Los Angeles *Times* and *Newsday*—had bought the *Times Herald* in 1969, in a deal that included five-year contracts for the management that was in place. As the contracts expired, the *Times Herald* launched an ambitious campaign to overtake the *Morning News* and become the preëminent newspaper of Dallas—a prize of considerable value, since the Dallas market was expanding daily in the Texas boom that had been touched off by the Arab oil embargo and fed by Sun Belt migration. The *Times Herald* gradually transformed itself into an all-day paper. New editors were hired from papers like the Washington *Post* and the Philadelphia *Inquirer*, and the new editors brought in eager young reporters from all over the country. The news coverage was aggressive, and the editors made it clear that they were unconcerned about which powerful citizen or potential advertiser might be in the line of fire. A sign on the newsroom wall said, "THE ONLY SACRED COW HERE IS HAMBURGER." The newsroom took on the sort of élan that in the early sixties was associated with the New York *Herald Tribune*. Reporters were encouraged to come up with stories that had what the new managing editor, Will Jarrett, called "pop" or "sizzle." The editorial page found a moderate niche in that vast area of opinion that lay to the left of the Dallas *Morning News*, and it put forward late-twentieth-century views on racial and social issues. The *Times Herald* solidified its position as the newspaper that concerned itself with the problems of Dallas's minorities, but, in a way, the new version of the paper seemed to be directed toward a new Dallas audience—the people who had moved to the Sun Belt from the North, the younger Dallas natives who had turned away a bit from the economic and cultural conservatism of their parents. It worked. In 1980—at the height of the boom—the *Times Herald*, which had started many laps behind, almost pulled even with the *Morning News* in circulation.

John Bloom was among the brightest of the *Times Herald's* new crop of bright young reporters. Will Jarrett had remembered him from a summer Bloom spent as a college interne at the Philadelphia *Inquirer*. Jarrett found Bloom in Nashville, where he was editing a country-club magazine, and hired him, despite the fact that two other editors who met him thought he was too shy to be a reporter. Bloom says he was the paper's "fluff specialist" for a while—the reporter papers depend on to write their way out of a story on the first day of spring or a story on the new baby giraffe at the zoo—but he also worked on stories about mistreatment of Mexican-Americans taken into police custody and about a resurgence of the Klan. After only two years on the paper, he was chosen to be what the *Times Herald* called its Texas Ranger—a reporter who roams across the state looking for stories. In 1978, he left to join *Texas Monthly*, a magazine whose young nonfiction writers were bringing it a national reputation, and then, toward the end of 1981, he returned to the *Times Herald* as the movie reviewer. Only a couple of months later, he went to the Century Drive-In in Grand Prairie and discovered Joe Bob Briggs.



There are any number of people on newspapers around the country who could easily be imagined sliding into the character of Joe Bob Briggs—people who wrap themselves in the blue-denim cloak of childhoods in places like west Texas or south Georgia—but John Bloom was not among them. Nothing about him suggested that he might harbor within him a wild nineteen-year-old redneck. Bloom was the son of schoolteachers—Southern Baptists from Texas who, fairly early in his childhood, settled in Little Rock. It was not a childhood spent beating up auto mechanics or watching trashy movies at drive-ins with the likes of May Ellen Masters and Cherry Dilday and the other girls Joe Bob was always describing as "dumb as a box of rocks." As an infant, Bloom had contracted polio, and he spent part of junior high school with a withered right leg in a brace. He grew into a tall, exceedingly thin, almost theatrically handsome young man with pale skin and a thatch of black hair and an almost imperceptible limp. In person, John Bloom would have fulfilled the expectations of a reader who had a strong vision of what a sensitive commentator on the *nouvelle vague* should look like, but he would have been a surprise to readers who had followed the ragged adventures of Joe Bob Briggs. When he is asked why he didn't acknowledge au-

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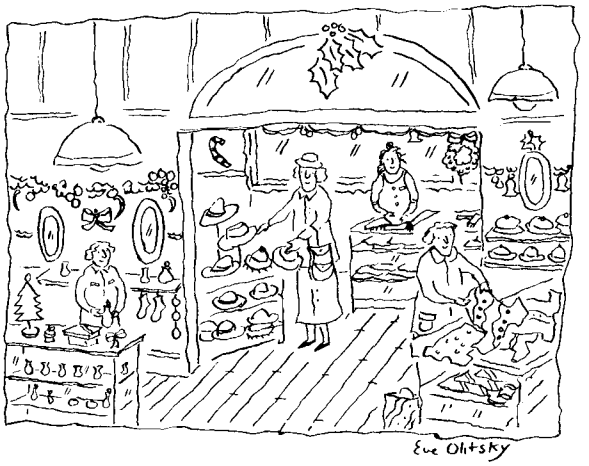
thorship of "Joe Bob Goes to the Drive-In," he sometimes says, "I was almost afraid people would feel disappointed if they met me."

Although Bloom obviously didn't turn out to be too shy to be a reporter, he never really became part of the newsroom crowd. At both the *Times Herald* and *Texas Monthly*, his colleagues thought of him as a sort of outsider, who was likely to have odd hours and odd friends. Editors considered him enormously talented and also quietly intent on having his own way. Partly because Bloom had written long, thoughtful pieces for *Texas Monthly* on an articulate fundamentalist minister and on the Wycliffe Bible Translators, he was sometimes called John the Baptist. People who knew him on *Texas Monthly* tend to use the same phrases when they talk about him, which might suggest a unanimity of opinion except that one of the phrases is "You never really feel you know him." They sometimes spoke of him as Good John and Bad John—the Good John seen as sensitive and intelligent, the Bad John as cold and manipulative—and not many of them felt close enough to him to know which was the actual John Bloom. Neither Good John nor Bad John seemed to presage Joe Bob Briggs. During Bloom's time at *Texas Monthly*, some of his colleagues felt him to be edging toward the right politically but certainly not to the sort of right represented by Joe Bob Briggs, who once wrote that he wasn't terribly happy about being syndicated in San Francisco because "it goes against my principles to write a column for communist-speaking cities." Looking back recently at Bloom's days on *Texas Monthly*, the magazine's editor, Gregory Curtis, said, "I wasn't surprised he could become someone else, but I thought he might have turned into a Baptist preacher."

However unlikely it was, though, John Bloom could, when it came time to write Friday's column, transform himself with great ease into Joe Bob Briggs. Bloom seemed to be among those writers who find the use of an alter ego or a pseudonym liberating: He has said that producing a Joe Bob column took him about three hours, counting the time spent watching the movie. Almost from the beginning, Joe Bob wrote about his own life as well as about such matters as the transvestite wrestling scene in "Chained Heat." Joe Bob might start talking about how he'd asked Junior Stebbens to do a complete overhaul on the Toronado he bought after the demise of the Dodge Dart or about how the young woman he always referred to as Ugly on a Stick "went down to Tex Pawn and tried to get a 30-year breast improvement loan," and almost forget to get around to the movie he had just seen. He always printed letters from readers—preference given to hate mail—and he always showed no respect in his replies. ("We're talking jerkola at the minimum. We're probably talking wimp.") Jim Schutze believes that in those early months Bloom, through local references and an ear for local language, created not just a generic redneck but someone representative of the people who had been left out of the new Dallas—"the people on the fringe of Dallas, this Yankee island, who were country, who had to drive in for work in their pickups."

Bloom saw Joe Bob not simply as a redneck but as a particularly smart, diabolical, anarchistic redneck who was "full of latent sexual and violent energies"—someone who wasn't afraid to say anything. What a country storyteller named Gamble Rogers once said of the ornery and fearlessly outspoken cracker was a central feature of Joe Bob's character: "He don't care. He flat do not care." In fact, Joe Bob took pleasure in saying whatever seemed likely to offend someone, and his response to finding out that what he said had indeed given offense was to say it again. (Writing in "Patriotic Gore" about a Tennessee cracker who was an alter ego of a mid-nineteenth-century journalist named George Washington Harris, Edmund Wilson said, "One of the most striking things about *Sut Lovingood* is that it is all as offensive as possible.") It was a characteristic that made people turn to Joe Bob first thing on Friday morning—wondering what he might have gone and said now, and wondering how long he was going to get away with it.

It was also, of course, the characteristic that made the high sheriffs at the *Times Herald* edgy. Early in Joe Bob's career, they established a special system under which each Joe Bob column was read by two copy editors, both of whom had instructions to summon an assistant managing editor at any sign of trouble. It isn't unusual for Texas writers to use a plainspoken character like Joe Bob. Molly Ivins, a popular *Times Herald* columnist who's based in Austin, tends to find her best material in the true adventures of Texas politicians—the gubernatorial candidate, for instance, whose fear of AIDS was so strong that on a trip to San Francisco last spring he wore shower caps on his feet while standing in the hotel bathtub—but she also refers often to a sort of all-purpose Texas ol' boy she calls Bubba. Having such a character write the column himself, though, presented some special problems. One of them was what some people called the Archie Bunker factor—the problem of whether the column is making fun of Joe Bob or of the people Joe Bob makes fun of. Also, part of Joe Bob's impact was based on saying something the readers would not have expected him to say. Although Bloom has always denied any strategy beyond trying to make jokes, there was a feeling at the *Times Herald* that Joe Bob had to "up the dosage" every Friday. "John's the sort of guy who wants to push and push," one of the high sheriffs said recently. "Like a college editor trying to get a bad word in the paper." At times, he was precisely like a college editor trying to get a bad word in the paper—the only difference being that the word's excision would provide Joe Bob with a joke about being muzzled by the high sheriffs or by "the jerkola french-fry head communist censors in Washington."



A couple of years after the column began, an editor's note in *Weekend* said that Joe Bob, mentioning such irritations as "too many high sheriffs" and "too many guys named Todd living in Dallas," had left what appeared to be a letter of resig-

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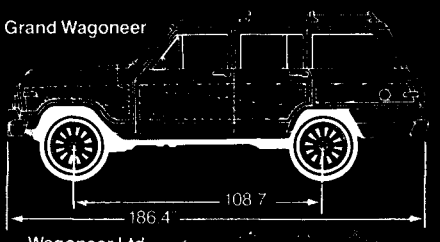

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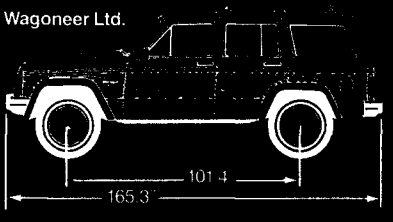

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nation, written on a page torn from a Big Chief spiral notebook. "Life is a tern bar and I'm out of here," Joe Bob wrote. "I'm history." But Joe Bob was back the next week, praising a movie called "The Being" for an "excellent slime glopola monster with moving mouth." By that time, there were people on the *Times Herald* who thought that the steady increase in dosage would inevitably make Job Bob history sooner or later, and one editor had offered the opinion that the high sheriffs might consider the advantages of simply picking an opportune moment to have Joe Bob's Toronado spin out on the interstate.

It would obviously be unusual under any circumstances for a newspaper to kill its most popular feature. It would have been particularly difficult in the circumstances the *Times Herald* found itself in. By the time the Joe Bob Briggs column had become established, it was clear that the race with the *Morning News* was being lost. There were any number of theories to explain what had happened. The *Morning News*, partly because of the competition and partly from the infusion of some new blood in management, had greatly improved, making up in thoroughness what it might have lacked in sizzle. Its editorial page still might not have given great offense to those who drafted the Dixiecrat platform in 1948, but its news department had, in Will Jarrett's grudging words, "kind of started practicing modern journalism." ("Newspaper competition is usually like high-low poker," Molly Ivins has said. "But in this case both players went high.") Meanwhile, the *Times Herald* was having some problems. For a variety of reasons, it was without strong editorial leadership for a while. There was a newsroom power struggle that sapped a lot of the paper's energy. Some observers outside the paper thought that the management had never learned the prescribed Dallas method of getting along with the business leaders—people who have assumed the synonymy of their interests and the city's interests for so long that they routinely describe any story not respectful to business as "anti-Dallas"—and some reporters inside the paper grumbled that management was beginning to get along with the business leaders too well. Some people thought that the *Times Herald* had, in covering all of those extra laps necessary to catch up with the *Morning News*, simply run out of wind. Among the shrinking bright spots was "Joe Bob Goes to the Drive-In," which might have been the best-read feature in either paper. The *Times Herald* didn't simply tolerate Joe Bob. It put his name on billboards. It sold baseball caps that said, "Joe Bob Briggs Sez Check It Out" and T-shirts that said, "Joe Bob Briggs Is a Close Personal Friend of Mine."

THE Baptists had been the first to complain. When it comes to objecting to offenses against public order and morality in Texas, they are rarely beaten to the punch. Southern Baptists are well represented in Dallas—the First Baptist Church, led by the Reverend W. A. Criswell, is the largest Baptist congregation in the entire country—but the first serious complaint from Baptists about Joe Bob Briggs came from a minister in Tyler, who said that Joe Bob's preoccupation with sex and violence revealed a sick mind. The Baptists were not alone. Joe Bob offended gays with some of his San Francisco jokes, and he offended feminists with his Miss Custom Body Contest. Joe Bob offended so many different people that the sheer variety of those he had outraged became part of the standard defense of his column: Joe Bob's admirers said that he was "an equal-opportunity offender." Joe Bob's response to complaints or criticism can be judged from an opinion survey he conducted after a San Francisco film critic named Peter Stack differed with him on whether a movie called "Basket Case" was an inept and disgusting splatter flick or the single best movie of 1982. Inviting the readers to settle the question democratically, Joe Bob provided a ballot that said, "Question: In your opinion, is the french-fry-head San Francisco writer named Peter Stack a wimp or not?" Stack did not come out well in the balloting.

Despite Joe Bob's habit of referring to all females as bimbos and his ubiquitous breast count and his celebration of movies that featured the dismemberment of women ("I'm telling you these bimbos get hacked up until it's chop suey city") and his sponsorship of the Miss Custom Body Contest ("All contestants must be able to count to the number seven, and may not use such a demonstration as their 'talent' "), the first strong attack from feminists didn't come until Joe Bob had been appearing for two years. A lot of women who read the *Times Herald*—including a lot of women who considered themselves feminists—thought Joe Bob was funny. A number of them thought that he served to demonstrate just how ludicrous Texas he-men were. In fact, before it became general knowledge that Joe Bob was a creature of John Bloom, Molly Ivins, who is widely known as a strong feminist, was regularly accused of being the author of "Joe Bob Goes to the Drive-In."

When the attack came, it was led by Charlotte Taft, who runs an abortion clinic called the Routh Street Women's Clinic. At the time, she had been feeling vaguely guilty about not organizing a protest against the local showing of "Pieces," a movie that had been picketed by feminists elsewhere because of its concentration on hideous violence against women. Someone who runs an abortion clinic in Dallas—where right-to-lifers seem to attack in endless waves, like Chinese regulars pouring over the 38th Parallel—can't always get around to the side issues. Then she came across a capsule review of the movie in the *Times Herald*. The *Weekend* section had got into the habit of running capsules by both of its movie reviewers, distinguishing them only by the initials at the end. Between reviews by JB of "The Osterman Weekend" (one star) and "The Right Stuff" (a star and a half), JBB's capsule review of "Pieces" said, "Best chainsaw flick since the original 'Saw,' about a gonzo geek pervert who goes around a college campus cutting up coeds into itty bitty pieces. Two heads roll. Arms roll. Legs roll. Something else rolls. Nine living breasts, two dead breasts. No motor vehicle chases. Gratuitous kung fu. Eight corpses. One beast with a chainsaw. Four gallons of blood. Not much talking. Splatter City. Joe Bob says check it out." The review included Joe Bob's rating: four stars.

Casting around for allies, Charlotte Taft found support from an old adversary—William Murchison, a con-

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servative columnist on the *Morning News*. Murchison wrote that the celebration of a movie like "Pieces" was not simply a feminist issue but a humanity issue—a reminder that people who make movies seem to take no notice of someone like Mother Teresa but think nothing of turning out a movie that "devalues the human species." The reply in Joe Bob's column was headlined "JOE BOB ATTACKED BY COMMUNIST FRIEND OF MOTHER TERESA." In it Joe Bob said, "Last week this royal jerkola with a bad haircut named William Murchison wrote a column called 'Chain-Sawing Our Culture.' He wrote it on the *editorial* page of the Dallas Morning Snooze. . . . It has this itty bitty picture of Willie Murchison with his lips mashed together like the zombie-monster in 'Dr. Tarr's Torture Garden,' and his eyes look exactly like the guy in 'I Drink Your Blood.' He also has a little resemblance to the woman-carver in 'I Dismember Mama,' but I'm sure that's just a coincidence." A couple of weeks later, Joe Bob finally got down to the issues at hand: "*Numero uno:* I have enormous respect for women. Especially when they have garbanzas the size of Cleveland. *Numero two-o:* I am violently opposed to the use of chainsaws, power drills, tire tools, rubber hoses, brass knuckles, bob wire, hypodermics, embalming needles or poleaxes against women, unless it is *necessary* to the plot. *Numero three-o:* I don't believe in slapping women around, unless they want it. *Numero four-o:* I would like to settle this matter in the easiest way possible, so I hereby challenge Charlotte Taft to a nude mud-wrestling match. . . ."

Charlotte Taft decided that a better way to settle it was to organize a letter-writing campaign to the *Times Herald*. It was based on the same argument she had made in her letter to the editor—that men in Dallas still seemed to think it was all right to make jokes about violence against women, decades after a supposedly responsible newspaper would dare find anything funny about, say, ridiculing black people. Eventually, though, the feminists decided that their efforts were going nowhere. The editors of the *Times Herald* seemed uninterested. The feminists themselves were by no means unanimous in condemning Joe Bob. Molly Ivins, for one, said that the complaints were "displaced anger." Interviewed for a feature on Joe Bob by KERA, the local public-television station, she said that what should be protested was "the vicious and degrading pornography" of exploitation movies, not someone who was "making brilliant fun of the kind of people who go to watch those movies." Charlotte Taft was never won over to that point of view. "John Bloom wanted to have it both ways—some readers taking it at face value and some taking it as satire," she said not long ago. "But part of satire is to instruct, not to wallow in the fun of saying what's not supposed to be said. If there's an Archie Bunker, there has to be a Meathead. What I saw in it was self-indulgence—the self-indulgence of someone who wants to tell a racist joke and pretends to be making fun of someone telling a racist joke. It was indulging in an adult the humor of a seventh-grader—a seventh-grade boy." She had decided, though, that all she was doing in her protest was providing material for Joe Bob, who wrote a lot about the high sheriffs' being pressured by what he always referred to as the National Organization for Bimbos.

John Bloom agreed that protest was just playing into Joe Bob's hands. On the KERA program, he was interviewed as Joe Bob's closest friend, and he said of the attacks by feminists, "One thing Joe Bob's critics should learn is that you should never attack an anarchist. He has nothing to lose." Using criticism as material for making fun of the critic was among the characteristics that, after two years, had been established firmly enough to be an unvarying part of Joe Bob's character. He could be counted on to reoffend the offended, just as he could be counted on to refer to women as bimbos, and to persist in trying to sneak in words that the high sheriffs considered inappropriate. John Bloom and Ron Smith and the other people at the *Times Herald* who dealt with Joe Bob, all of whom spoke of him in the third person even among themselves, still had the power to arrange for his Toronado to spin out on the interstate, of course. But as long as Joe Bob existed he was, in certain ways, on his own.

"HE'S *gone* to all these movies," Charlotte Taft has said. "I find that kind of scary." Even those who didn't find it eerie that an honors graduate of Vanderbilt could thrive on a steady diet of splatter flicks might have wondered just how many chain-saw dismemberments and kung-fu battles anyone could sit through without becoming too bored even to maintain an accurate body count. As it turned out, though, John Bloom got tired of movie-reviewing before Joe Bob did. In 1984, Bloom gave up reviewing to become the paper's Metro columnist—someone responsible for three columns a week. Writing the Metro column was considered a full-time job, but once a week Bloom continued to turn into Joe Bob Briggs. In January of 1985, that became twice a week. Blackie Sherrod, one of the most popular sportswriters in Dallas, had jumped to the *Morning News*, and the *Times Herald* countered with a new sportswriter of its own—Joe Bob Briggs. Bloom had actually started out in newspapers writing sports for the Arkansas *Democrat* while he was still in high school; he went through Vanderbilt on a Grantland Rice Scholarship awarded by the Thoroughbred Racing Associations. Will Jarrett has said that he saw the sports column "Jock Talk with Joe Bob," as more than simply a counter to Sherrod. "I thought of it as Phase Two," he said not long ago. "The bimbo thing was kind of played out. He was depending a lot on ethnic humor. There was a lot of material in sports. John knew the field. It was a way to ride his popularity and get rid of some of the problem areas." Even writing about sports, of course, Joe Bob did not avoid the problem areas completely. In one of the first "Jock Talk" columns, he managed to make up a Boston Celtics theme song called "Attack of the Stupid White People" and to refer to Tony Nathan, of the Miami Dolphins, as "the only slow Negro in the NFL."

Will Jarrett had been off editing the Denver *Post* during most of the time Joe Bob was steadily dismantling many of the barriers against tastelessness the high sheriffs had erected, and he says that when he returned to Dallas, in 1984, he was surprised to see what Joe Bob was getting away with. There were occasional flareups from offended readers—there were complaints from members of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), for instance, when Joe Bob organized a group called Drunks Against Mad Mothers (DAMM)—but Jarrett got the impression that a lot of readers had been following Joe Bob Briggs long enough to shrug off most of what he said as just the sort of thing Joe Bob would say. *Times Herald* editors had

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never truly lost their nervousness about running the column, though, and some people around the newsroom were, in fact, troubled by what they saw as an increasing reliance on ethnic cracks. Reviewing a movie called "Breakin'," for instance, Joe Bob managed to mention not simply "Negro Dancing" but also "Meskins," the perils he saw in Vietnamese immigration ("Pretty soon you can't go in 7-Eleven without wondering whether those guys are putting dog meat in the frozen burritos"), and a character "whose idea of a good time is to go sit on the beach with guys from the chorus line and talk about their Liberace record collections, if you know what I mean and I think you do"—all in the course of saying that he had been shown the path from racism by his friend Bobo Rodriguez: "I never did ask Bobo what race he was, but I'm pretty sure he was a Negro. His skin was the color of Taster's Choice Decaffeinated, which means he could go either way, but one time he tried to change his name to Bobo al-Salaam, and when he did that everybody started calling him 'Al' because they thought he was saying 'Al Sloan.' "

Although some of Joe Bob's fans around the *Times Herald* may have fallen away, he was publicly more popular than ever. His column was being syndicated to fifty papers or so, making him a figure of renown even in San Francisco—a place he normally referred to as "Wimp Capital of the World" or "Geek City, U.S.A." He was so popular in Cleveland that when the editors of the *Plain Dealer* decided to drop his column for tastelessness an avalanche of reader mail persuaded them to put it back. In some film circles, he was a sort of cult figure—someone who could attract Stephen King to the Third Annual World Drive-In Movie Festival and Custom Car Rally. There were those, though, who thought that Joe Bob's national popularity was his undoing. They thought that "the golden age of Joe Bob" had been in the early months of the column, when Joe Bob could be understood in a local context and could spice up his column with local stunts, like organizing a letter-writing campaign to the public official he held responsible for the removal of the drive-in-movie screens at Texas Stadium ("Dear French-fry Head Mayor of Irving . . ."). There were those who thought Joe Bob's undoing was that Bloom was spreading himself too thin by writing five columns a week. Theories about Joe Bob's undoing were widely discussed and closely analyzed in the spring of 1985, because on one April Friday the worst fears that *Times Herald* high sheriffs had entertained about the Joe Bob Briggs column finally materialized.

THE offending column, published a couple of months after rock stars gathered in California to record a song for African famine relief, was headlined "JOE BOB, DRIVE-IN ARTISTS JOIN FORCES FOR MINORITIES WITH 'WE ARE THE WEIRD.' " Joe Bob said that the best-known drive-in artists in the world had gathered together to sing the song: "They all stood there, swaying from side to side, arms linked (except for The Mutant, who don't have arms) and singing their little hearts out." Although Joe Bob's song does not lend itself to summary—it's never precisely clear who's singing about exactly what—the first chorus was representative of its tone:

> We are the weird.
> We are the starvin,
> We are the scum of the filthy earth,
> So let's start scarfin . . .
> There's a goat-head bakin
> We're calling it their food,
> If the Meskins can eat it,
> They can eat it, too.

The drive-in stars' recording was, Joe Bob wrote, "for the benefit of minority groups in Africa and the United Negro College Fund in the United States, cause I think we should be sending as many Negroes to college as we can, specially the stupid Negroes."

It wasn't immediately clear how such a column found its way into the *Times Herald* and the distribution network of the Los Angeles Times Syndicate. The copy editors apparently had not flagged an assistant managing editor. According to one rather ornate theory, Joe Bob had for months been trying to sneak the word "twat" past the two copy editors, and they were concentrating so hard on spotting it—examining each syllable in the name of any town Joe Bob invented, searching any new organization for contraband acronyms—that they weren't paying enough attention to the content of the column. According to another theory, the copy editors, after a few years of reading Joe Bobbian copy, had grown desensitized, as some people are said to get after prolonged exposure to pornography. Bloom has always insisted that a managing editor who happened to walk by his desk and glance at the column on his computer monitor read the entire song, laughed, and said, "Great stuff!"

There were plenty of readers around Dallas who were as accustomed to Joe Bob's ways as the copy editors were, but not many of these readers were black. Even though the black community regarded the *Times Herald* as the newspaper sympathetic to its interests, "Joe Bob Goes to the Drive-In" had never attracted a wide black readership. The first Joe Bob column that a lot of black people in Dallas read was the column that included a famine-relief song with verses like:

> Send em a heart so they'll know that someone cares
> And a lung, and an elbow, and three big toes.
> As the Big Guy told us, we should always clean our plate,
> Cause then all the Africans' stomachs won't look gross.

"After a while, you get sort of used to Joe Bob," Ron Smith has said. "But if you read that thing flat cold it'll send chills up your spine. And that's the way a lot of black people read it."

Willis Johnson, who runs a morning talk show on KKDA, Dallas's leading black radio station, was not in the habit of reading Joe Bob's column, but he got a call from a listener—a reporter for the *Morning News*, as it happened—who told him he would do well to make an exception in this case. Johnson, who was outraged by the column, read it over the air, and the mounting rage soon monopolized his program. The *Times Herald* was also having serious trouble within its own building. Black *Times Herald* employees from a number of departments

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were furious about the column, and a meeting at which Bloom tried to explain himself only made things worse. By then, it was obvious that the outrage over the "We Are the Weird" column was of another order than the customary Joe Bob controversies that always blew over after some angry letters and a few Joe Bobbian jokes at the complainants' expense. One of Willis Johnson's callers had been John Wiley Price, a black county commissioner. Price is among a small group of militant black officeholders in Dallas who have tried to ease aside the black ministers whose style of leadership flowed from the old accommodation with the white business community. On the air, Price and Johnson agreed to go downtown on Tuesday afternoon, right after a weekly black-leadership lunch, and demand to know why the *Times Herald*, the newspaper that supposedly represented fair treatment for minorities in Dallas, had on its staff someone who used phrases like "stupid Negroes" and found it humorous to ridicule starving people in Africa. When they arrived that Tuesday afternoon, they found that they had been joined by several hundred other people. In a city that had basically skipped the public confrontations of the civil-rights struggle, the presence of a large crowd of black people marching into a white institution in an angry mood was virtually unprecedented.

Jarrett and two other editors met with as many of the protesters as could be jammed into a small auditorium. The room was hot, and got even hotter when television lights were turned on. The people in the audience were fanning themselves with whatever was at hand. The three editors, surrounded by protesters, were sweating. That morning's edition had already printed an apology of a completeness that Will Jarrett called unique in his years of newspaper experience: "Joe Bob Briggs' column that appeared in Friday's *Times Herald* offended many readers. The *Times Herald* deeply regrets that the column was published. It was a misdirected attempt at satire. A great deal of insensitivity was reflected in the column. We apologize." But the crowd did not seem satisfied with an apology, however abject. "One apology in one postage-stamp-size corner of the front page is not enough," a black attorney said. "This column needs to be gone." Jarrett started out by saying that the question of whether "Joe Bob Goes to the Drive-In" would be run in the next Friday's paper was still being considered, but after a number of angry speeches he finally said, "I'm deeply concerned about it. I'm deeply concerned about the reaction. I'm deeply concerned about the staff reaction to it. So the Joe Bob Briggs column, the *Weekend* column, the drive-in-movie column, is dead." In a much smaller, more conventional meeting a few days later, the *Times Herald* pledged that twelve of the next twenty-two editorial positions filled would be filled by members of a minority. But for most of the black people of Dallas nothing could quite match the exhilaration of that public capitulation in the steamy auditorium, right there in front of the television cameras. Above the cheers that followed Jarrett's announcement the voice of a woman in the first few rows could be heard shouting, in triumph and amazement, "We did it! We did it!"

John Bloom was a hundred and fifty miles away from Dallas that afternoon, delivering a speech at Texas A. & M. Will Jarrett drove out to Dallas–Fort Worth Airport to meet Bloom's return flight, but the plane had arrived early; Bloom was already on his way back to the city. It was days before they finally met again. Bloom wouldn't talk to Jarrett on the telephone. He was hurt and angry. He saw the front-page apology as a writer being "publicly disavowed by his own newspaper, not for any factual error or misrepresentation, but purely because his opinion is unpopular." He considered the way that Jarrett had cancelled the column—publicly, without telling the columnist—basically unforgivable. Jarrett, who had brought Bloom to Dallas and remained close to him in the years that followed, was astonished that Bloom wouldn't come to the phone. "What I was worried about was John Bloom," he has said. "I realized that Joe Bob was more important to him than John Bloom was. John Bloom wouldn't talk to his editor for three days, even though Joe Bob had done the damage. I didn't fire John Bloom. I fired a mythical character John Bloom had always said he didn't agree with. Why was he mad at me?"

Jarrett had hoped that Bloom would continue writing his own column, and maybe even the "Jock Talk with Joe Bob" column. But John Bloom decided to resign from the *Times Herald*. In a final Metro column, which Jarrett declined to print, Bloom wrote that the real issue was not racism but the fact that some subjects, like African famine relief, had been put off limits for satire because "they are too close to our subconscious fears and guilts,' and he reminded Jarrett of the newsroom sign that had said, "The Only Sacred Cow Here Is Hamburger.' He didn't discuss the offending column except to say that on the question of who the "we" was in lines like "we are the scum of the filthy earth"—the question that some *Times Herald* people referred to as Joe Bob's pronoun problem—"I realize I'm the person who should know the answer to this question, but I'm afraid I was too busy laughing to worry about Joe Bob's illogic." By the time Bloom resigned there couldn't have been many people left in Dallas who were still unaware of the true authorship of the "Joe Bob Goes to the Drive-In" column—all pretense had been dropped in the barrage of news coverage of the controversy—but Bloom said he was resigning in sympathy with Joe Bob.

No one else at the *Times Herald* showed much sympathy. A lot of *Times Herald* reporters—and a lot of other Dallas reporters—were indeed horrified at what seemed to be a capitulation under pressure in the *Times Herald* auditorium. "It created a precedent that's dangerous," Molly Ivins has said. "I know that Reverend Criswell could have five thousand people there about me at the drop of a hat." But that didn't translate into newsroom support for Joe Bob. In fact, most of the people in the newsroom had, in the first days of the controversy, signed a bulletin-board statement demanding that Joe Bob's column be more closely edited in the future. *Times Herald* reporters did not see what had happened as a case of one of their own being crushed by management. They didn't consider John Bloom one of their own. Not many of them actually knew him, and some of them may have resented him with the special resentment reporters reserve for someone who seems to be getting away with the sort of writing that would be routinely edited out of their own copy. Some of them, particularly the younger ones, had long felt that it was dishonest for a newspaper to keep up the pretense that a fictional columnist

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ctually existed. Also, as Jim Schutze ut it recently, "they were the ones who answered the phone when people tarted calling in and saying, 'The rouble is these colored people don't now good say-tire when they see .' "

Even more important, a lot of the eporters simply hated the "We Are he Weird" column. They didn't now who the "we" in the song was, ither—figuring out how the humor orked in the column required an al- ost scholarly knowledge of Joe Bob- ian context—but, unlike Bloom, they eren't too busy laughing to care. Sat- e is obviously most offensive when he reader's first response isn't laugh- r; it lies there, waiting to be ana- zed. Those in the newsroom who ought Joe Bob's problem was more a his delivery than in his subject mat- r pointed out that the rock stars' frican-relief effort was not, in fact, a cred cow; a number of political car- onists and columnists had already aken a crack at it. But the column's bject matter was at the heart of the pposition. "Satire is a weapon you use gainst the powerful," Molly Ivins, ho was not on Joe Bob's side this me, has said. "You don't use satire gainst the weak." Bloom's position eemed to be that a truly liberal society ouldn't recognize any subject as off mits: now that black people are equal artners in modern, postsegregationist merica, it would be patronizing not o subject them equally to the occa- onal satiric knock. What people like Molly Ivins found wrong with that as the assumption that black people re now equal partners in modern merica. Presumably, most people at he *Times Herald* would have agreed ith Bloom that these days a newspa- er columnist is a lot less likely to get way with a joke about starving Afri- ans or "stupid Negroes" than with a oke about the President, but not many f them seemed to think it followed hat such jokes had to be made.

"For forty-eight hours, I thought, Vell, it's over. It's gone up in flames. nd it's kind of an ignominious end," Bloom said not long ago. "Then I tarted getting these letters. A large umber of responsible editors and re- orters had been saying, 'The guy got hat he deserved,' but the readers ere saying, 'You can't let them do his.' Joe Bob was always responsive o readers." The column had been ropped by the Los Angeles Times yndicate as well as by the *Times Her- ld*, but, without missing a week, Joe Bob signed with the Universal Press Syndicate, which has some experience with controversy as the distributors of Garry Trudeau's "Doonesbury." The first Universal column dealt, of course, with the *Times Herald* decision to kill the column—or with the assassination of Joe Bob in Dallas, as Bloom saw it.

"November 22, 1963. April 16, 1985," the column began. "They said it couldn't happen again.

"I guess I'll always remember where I was when they killed me on national TV, right after the Maybelline commercial. I guess we all will. Who couldn't remember the look on the High Sheriff's face when he said, 'Joe Bob's dead!' . . . Even though the High Sheriff was arrested at the scene by TV reporters with bad hair, there were immediate rumors of an international communist conspiracy, the 'three-gun theory,' the 'act of God theory,' the bizarre 'one-garbanza theory,' and the 'What would happen if you dropped Joe Bob Briggs off a seven-story building and watched him splatter all over the pavement?' theory." After some Joe Bobbian talk about the protest and a list of astonishing coincidences ("Lincoln and Kennedy were both assassinated on a Friday. Joe Bob was assassinated on a Tuesday. Makes you think"), Joe Bob found space for a quick summary of a movie called "Lust in the Dust": "Four breasts. Fifteen dead bodies. One riot. One brawl. One gang rape, with midget. Two quarts blood. One beast (Divine). Thigh crushing. Bullwhip fu. Nekkid bimbo-wrestling . . ." It would have been uncharacteristic, of course, for Joe Bob to acknowledge any regrets about the "We Are the Weird" column or apologize to those it might have offended, and Bloom, when asked about an apology, tends to say something like "Apologize for what? There's not a single fact in the column. They say it's insensitive and in poor taste. Well, Joe Bob is insensitive and in poor taste. I'll admit that."

THE decision of the *Times Herald* to kill the Joe Bob drive-in column, which John Bloom seems to have heard as a decision to kill Joe Bob, served to make Joe Bob a much larger part of John Bloom's life. Bloom continued to write under his own name—eventually, he began doing a monthly piece for Dallas's city magazine, *D*, and he started a book on Route 66—but in the free-lance market Joe Bob Briggs was likely to get more assignments than John Bloom. For one thing, he was much better known, particularly after the "We Are the Weird" controversy. John Bloom is one of a number of talented young Texas writers. Joe Bob Briggs is a writer who can provide a unique way for *Film Comment* to deal with exploitation movies or for *Rolling Stone* to deal with the end of the Texas boom. Writing under his own name, Bloom had difficulty finding a publisher for a serious nonfiction book he and another *Texas Monthly* writer, Jim Atkinson, wrote about a Texas murder; it was finally published by the Texas Monthly Press. As Joe Bob Briggs, he had assumed, correctly, that there were big-shot publishers in New York interested in getting filthy rich off his books.

The change was more than Joe Bob's simply easing out of the three-hour-a-week compartment Bloom had kept him in. A couple of months after Bloom left the *Times Herald*, his agent got a call from someone in Cleveland who offered to set up a speaking engagement for Joe Bob Briggs. Bloom, who had not even officially admitted writing the Joe Bob column until the "We Are the Weird" controversy erupted, decided to accept the date as Joe Bob. In a high school just outside Cleveland, he did a sort of one-man show, costumed in a cowboy hat and a more pronounced drawl. After that, those who phoned Bloom's agent with lecture inquiries were asked whether they were interested in John Bloom or Joe Bob Briggs. Joe Bob's rates were higher.

Bloom has said that in those first months of being on his own he was intent on keeping Joe Bob alive, partly because he was convinced that the high sheriffs' intentions toward Joe Bob continued to be murderous. Their weapon was a copyright. Although no objection had been raised to the Uni-

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versal Press Syndicate's distribution of "Joe Bob Goes to the Drive-In," the *Times Herald* warned Dell, which was about to publish a collection of Joe Bobbiana, that John Bloom owned neither the name Joe Bob Briggs nor the rights to the material that had appeared in the *Times Herald*. The argument over rights exacerbated a hostility that already carried the special bitterness of a disagreement between people who had once been close. In his stage appearances as Joe Bob, Bloom had taken to referring to his old employer as the *Slimes Herald* and singing a song about how he'd like to make "editor fondue" out of the high sheriff who fired him—a high sheriff who happened to be John Bloom's old friend and mentor, Will Jarrett. ("A heart attack would do it, or trampled by a mob, or eaten by a giant bumblebee.")

Bloom claimed that the paper wanted to prevent the publication of Joe Bob's books out of spite. The high sheriffs of the *Times Herald* and the Times Mirror Company were indeed furious about the "We Are the Weird" incident—some of them saw it as one horrifying column destroying a position with the minority community that had taken years to establish—and they were apparently wounded by Joe Bob's insults. At one point, the paper offered to release the material under conditions that included a promise not to ridicule the *Times Herald* or its executives. The proposed agreement would also have given the paper control over which columns appeared in a book. Jarrett has said that the main issue was whether the *Times Herald* could acquiesce in the republication of the "We Are the Weird" column: "We'd be in the position of saying, 'Right, this is awful, it should never have been printed, we're going to kill the column,' and then turning around and saying, 'Sure, go ahead and publish it in a book, make a lot of money.' The black people would have said we were hypocrites." Bloom rejected the proposed agreement, and after months of meetings and lawyers' letters and phone calls he filed legal papers against the *Times Herald* in an attempt to liberate Joe Bob Briggs.

LAST summer, a little more than a year after the cancellation of the column, Bloom's lawyer won a declaratory judgment on one of the two questions at issue—the question of who had a right to use the name Joe Bob Briggs—and a date was set to hear arguments on whether Bloom had the right to reprint the columns that had appeared in the *Times Herald*. Outside the courtroom, the blood-feud aspect of the disagreement had begun to dissipate. Will Jarrett had already left the paper, in a purge that also claimed some executives on the business side. Not long after the declaratory judgment, the Times Mirror Company, in what the New York *Times* story called "an apparent acknowledgment that it was unable to win the heated Dallas newspaper war," announced that it was selling the *Times Herald*. The buyer was a young, Texas-born newspaper magnate who said he was moving the headquarters of his enterprises from New Jersey to Dallas and intended to become active in "the Dallas leadership community." The Joe Bob suit was specifically excluded from the assets and liabilities passed on to the new owner, and it was assumed that the sale had completed the transformation of the Joe Bob controversy from a serious altercation into the sort of loose end that a large corporation likes to have tied up before it leaves town. Times Mirror and John Bloom quickly settled their differences, and Dell made plans to publish the collection in the form Bloom wanted it published. Joe Bob, in effect, belonged to John Bloom.

A lot of Bloom's old colleagues do not think he won a great asset. "What bothers me is that John Bloom is a significant talent who can endure, and Joe Bob is an ephemeral kind of thing," one of them said recently. "If John thinks no one else can kill Joe Bob, fine. Then at some point he should kill Joe Bob himself." The syndicated Joe Bob column is in fact a marginal operation. It appears in a few dozen newspapers, but a lot of them are college papers or alternative weeklies. The pattern, Bloom says, is

that the feature editor buys the col umn, it runs once, and the executiv editor cancels it. It's a difficult colum to sell. The reason is partly the tradi tional cautiousness of newspapers— Bloom has always maintained that th only reason Joe Bob appears outra geous is that the material surroundin him is so bland—but it is also partl that the "We Are the Weird" contro versy gave Joe Bob a reputation no simply for controversy but also for rac ism.

Joe Bob's one-man show has bee polished considerably since its rathe shaky start in Cleveland. He has eve put out a video, called "Joe Bo Briggs Dead in Concert." Like a lo of shy people who have to transforn themselves into public characters Bloom uses hats in the stage show— cowboy hat, a feed hat, one of thos caps that have horns extending fron the sides. Joe Bob tells stories abou bimbos and Baptists and a count where the major industry is dirt. H sings songs like "Dirt Mine Blues' and "We Are the Weird" (with th words significantly toned down). Thi fall, he used his column to recruit troupe of seriously overweight youn women, and in a Dallas appearance o the weekend of the Texas-Oklahom game he worked them into the act a the Dancing Bovina Sisters, doin dances like the Frito Stomp. Peopl who know John Bloom tend to b surprised that he's as fluid as he i onstage, but the act has received mixe reviews. One of the problems of Jo Bob's coming to life was pointed out couple of years ago by Bloom himself when he was explaining to Denni Holder, in the *Washington Journalism Review*, why Joe Bob could never b on television: "This thing is so fragil that the last thing you'd want is t remove the mystery and magi through the cold reality of a camera If you ever gave Joe Bob a specific face, or even a voice, some of the power would be lost." Onstage, Bloom plays a redneck who tells stories but that may disappoint people wh hope to see the real Joe Bob. A head line in the San Francisco *Chronicle* after Joe Bob's appearance in the Wimp Capital of the World said "JOE BOB 'LIVE' IS A PUSSYCAT." Molly Ivins says that even without having seen the act she knows that Bloom can't be very persuasive as Joe Bob Briggs. "For one thing, he's too good-looking," she said not long ago. "If he could act, he'd play the young Byron."

"I'm bothered that he's given up

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serious journalism for a cardboard cowboy," Will Jarrett said recently. In general, Bloom's former colleagues tend to talk about him the way a bunch of medievalists would talk about one of their number who had gone off to write potboilers. Their theories of just why Bloom is hanging on so hard to Joe Bob depend a bit on what they thought of him in the first place. Some people think it's just pure stubbornness. Some think that under Bloom's shy exterior was always a lust for show business; they point out that he became pals with some Hollywood types during his regular movie-reviewing days, and that he has appeared in a scene (later cut) in the sequel to "Texas Chainsaw Massacre." Some people think that Bloom sees Joe Bob as a ticket to fame and fortune, and some people think that Bloom sat through so many splatter movies "his brain got fried." Some people think that John Bloom, no matter how enlightened and how educated, simply had a wild, racist redneck inside him, and that the redneck has finally surfaced; they tend to say, "John Bloom has become Joe Bob Briggs." Bloom himself says that he'll kill off Joe Bob when he gets tired of him. "Maybe I'll do it until I find the heart of Joe Bob, find out what about him disturbs people," he said recently. "When you see what a threat Joe Bob is to people, the issue becomes the integrity of Joe Bob."

Joe Bob Briggs is no longer much of a presence in Dallas. His column appears in a weekly paper, *The Observer*, and there are still plenty of hard-core Joe Bob fans. But the day is past when all Friday-morning talk seemed to center on what Joe Bob had gone and said now. These days, on Friday morning or any other morning, the talk in Dallas's shiny new office buildings is likely to be about how many square feet of the building remain unleased; the people driving into the city in pickups are likely to be concerned about whether a job will still be there when they arrive. When Joe Bob's mentioned, it's often in the past tense. "The trouble with the character was that he had to push it further and further," Molly Ivins said not long ago. "The poor bastard just outlived his time." The talk about how Joe Bob's column ended sounds a bit like the talk that could be heard in some other American cities twenty years ago—some white people saying that militant blacks were simply look-

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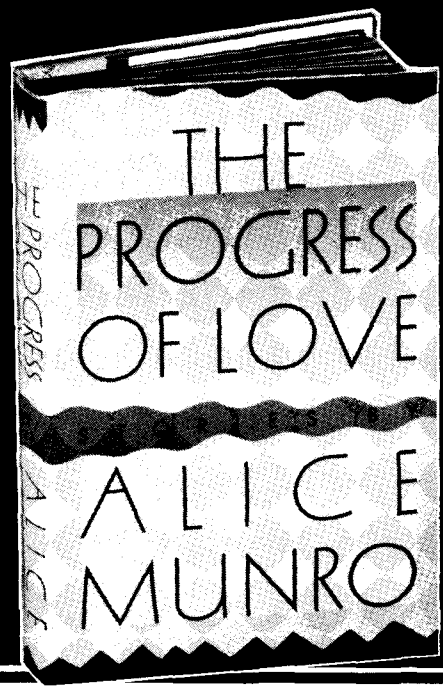

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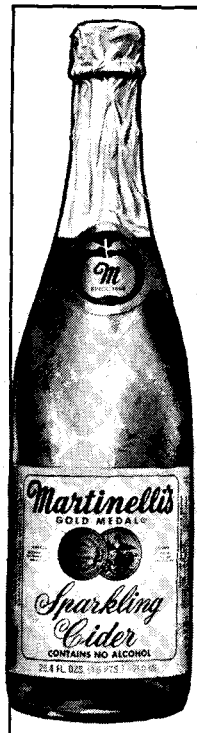

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ing for an issue, and militant blacks saying that *of course* they were looking for an issue. For a while, people like Willis Johnson thought that the success in galvanizing people around the issue of Joe Bob Briggs might awaken what was sometimes referred to as the sleeping giant of the Dallas black community. They thought that the victory in the *Times Herald* auditorium might serve as an impetus for a more confrontational approach in dealing with the white business community. But there is now a widespread feeling that the giant stretched and then went back to sleep. Johnson says that he and John Wiley Price have been subjected to some criticism among the traditional leadership for not trying to settle differences with the *Times Herald* in a quieter way. Charlotte Taft is still at the Routh Street Women's Clinic. One set of fundamentalists shows up to picket on Wednesday, another set pickets on Saturday, and the Catholics have set up next door in one of those operations whose advertising and name seem designed to attract young women who think they're going to an abortion clinic but find themselves in a place dedicated to talking them out of it. Sometimes, Charlotte Taft gets discouraged. When she ponders the difficulty of financing her operation through the usual fund-raising events, she said with a smile not long ago, she sometimes thinks she might have been too quick in rejecting Joe Bob's nude-mud-wrestling challenge.

The *Times Herald* now has the same problem every other daily newspaper has in figuring out how to cover trashy movies. The paper is under new management, and there has been a lot of turnover in staff. Some people on and off the paper say that the controversy over Joe Bob was what finally pushed the Times Mirror Company into giving up on the Dallas newspaper war. There were, of course, solid business reasons for selling the *Times Herald*, which had just dipped into the red after fifteen years of considerable profits. The Dallas boom had fizzled. The war with the *Morning News* had been lost. The resources of the Times Mirror Company could presumably be better invested elsewhere. Those who say that the Joe Bob episode was the last straw for Times Mirror—the experience that soured it forever on Dallas—seem to mean that more symbolically or spiritually than literally. In the words of Ron Smith, one of the people who brought Joe Bob into the world, dealing with the "We Are the Weird" controversy was for the Times Mirror Company "like biting into a bad clam."

The advertising campaign of the new management features a picture of the new editor saying, "Nobody wants to read a wimp newspaper." It is said that the use of a Joe Bobbian word is a coincidence, but there is a temptation to see some connection between the strong anti-wimp statement and the fact that the capitulation in the auditorium left some lingering taint of wimpiness in the building. It also left a new verb in Dallas—"to Joe Bob," meaning to march on an institution with an intimidating number of citizens and hope to buffalo that institution into changing some policy. When Jim Schutze wrote a column critical of one of the black ministers in Dallas some time ago, for instance, the response of one of the minister's supporters was the threat "We're going to come down there and Joe Bob your ass." Some people on the *Times Herald* resent the part played by both John Bloom and management in creating the situation that led to the verb's existence, and some of the same people miss the excitement of those Friday mornings when everyone turned to *Weekend* to see who had been called a Communist French-fry head this week. Talking about the career of Joe Bob Briggs at the Dallas *Times Herald* recently, Ron Smith said that Shelby Coffey III, who was the editor of the paper at the time the Times Mirror Company sold it, once turned down an idea for a satirical feature by remarking, "This paper has a sorry history on satire"—an allusion, of course, to Joe Bob Briggs. "I took exception to that," Smith said. "I don't think it was sorry. I think it was a noble experiment that went awry."

—Calvin Trillin

• •

Elizabeth will be the first British monarch to visit China. The only other communist state she has been to is Yugoslavia.

During her weeklong stay, she plans to tour Peking, Shanghai, Canton, the ancient capital of Xian, about 450 miles southwest of Peking, and the southern city of Kunming, more than 700 miles west of Canton. Women have trouble with financial terms

—*Casper (Wyo.) Star-Tribune.*

Not queens, certainly?

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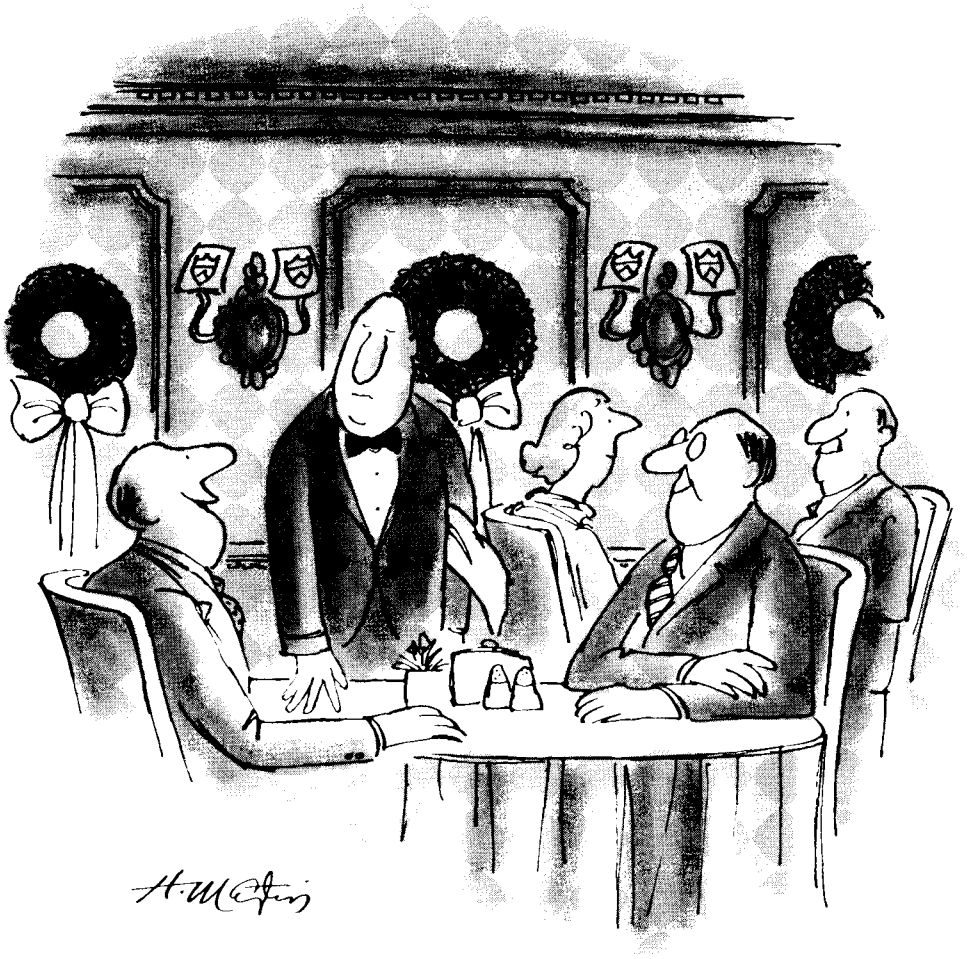
MUSICAL EVENTS

Princess and Painter

BUSONI's two-act opera "Turandot"—it lasts about ninety minutes—was composed in 1916-17 as a simpler companion piece to his intellectually intricate one-act opera "Arlecchino." Last month, it had its American stage première, at the Palace Theatre in Stamford, Connecticut, done by the Connecticut Grand Opera and Stamford State Opera. It is a swift-moving, attractive work, lighter in texture, closer to Carlo Gozzi's play "Turandot," and more finely tuned to modern theatrical ideas than Puccini's full-scale "Turandot" (1920-24). Puccini's starting point was Schiller's adaptation of the Gozzi play, which Schiller thought "lacks a certain fullness of poetic life" and is too puppetlike. (Goethe directed the première of the Schiller version in Weimar in 1802.) Busoni's starting point was incidental music for the Gozzi play which he had composed in 1905. Both composers departed from their sources. Poor little Liù is an invention of Puccini and his librettists, a sentimental transformation of Gozzi's Adelma; so is the masterful kiss that melts Turandot's heart of ice. Busoni, his own librettist, cut much and invented little. He added the Queen Mother of Samarkand, a fantastical Negress decked with colored ostrich plumes, whose son has been the latest victim of the Turandot riddle contest. He reduced the four commedia-dell'arte characters—Venetians who have landed up in Peking and become court officials there—to three. (Puccini followed suit, and—despite his first instinct to retain "an Italian element amid so much Chinese mannerism"—made them Chinese.) He omitted the attempted suicides of Calaf and Adelma. The result is even more laconic and more modern in effect than Gozzi's play. Its moral might be: The unattainable *can* be attained—but only in a world of fantasy. The theme recurs in Busoni's "Doktor Faust."

Gozzi's dramatic fables were written in opposition to Carlo Goldoni's comedies of real life. With their supernatural incidents, gay foolery, and irreality, they have been rediscovered again and again through the centuries by people sated with domestic or historical drama and seeking fresh stage imagery in the *genere fantastico*. They were championed by Goethe and Schiller, E. T. A. Hoffmann, Max Reinhardt, V. E. Meyerhold. And Gozzi has often been a great composer's inspiration: from Wagner's "Die Feen," through Prokofiev's "Love of Three Oranges" and these two "Turandot" operas, to Hans Werner Henze's "König Hirsch." Weber and Roger Sessions wrote incidental music for "Turandot." (In a Goldoni/Gozzi opposition one could pair "Figaro" and "The Magic Flute," "Der Rosenkavalier" and "Die Frau Ohne Schatten," perhaps even "La Traviata" and "Macbeth.") Busoni, like Weber and Puccini, used and transformed Chinese melodies discovered in histories of exotic music. (He also used "Greensleeves," which fits in very well once its Tudor associations are dismissed.) "Turandot" is not one of Busoni's more profound compositions. It has a dry, neat quality that is very pleasing. It is high-spirited but never gushing. As in Gozzi, emotions are stated strongly and simply, not wallowed in. The instrumental colors, the trenchant harmonies, the bold counterpoints are distinctive. People sometimes say that Busoni's music lacks personality; I hear his personal stamp on every page.

The Stamford performance was for the most part admirable. Patricia Craig, the Turandot, is one of America's superior sopranos. Her voice is at its prime. (She will be forty next year.) It moves ably and surely, and remains true, steady, and unforced at climaxes. There was distinction in her phrasing. She has studied, I understand, with Magda Olivero, and mention of that name may suggest some of the stylistic assurance that marks Miss Craig's performances. As an actress she was less certain: her coiffure was unbecoming, her costumes were not grandly worn, and, amid fiery or tender moments, there were moments of deadness in her features, as if her thoughts had already moved on to the next phrase. But, all in all, she showed a command, both vocal and interpretative, of a very difficult role which is not common today. Calaf was a new Spanish tenor, Juan Luque Carmona, making his American dé-



"We'll have a wassail bowl and two cups."

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but. We will certainly be hearing more of him. He has a well-formed, supple voice, bright and forward in its focus, effortlessly energetic. Calaf begins the opera with an exclamatory aria, "Peking! City of marvels!" Mr. Carmona's phrases rang out freely. He joined note to note, filling the lines. He was a plain, unprepossessing actor but a singer good to hear. The first twentieth-century revivals of Donizetti's "Parisina" (in 1964) and "Pia de' Tolomei" (in 1967), in Siena, were distinguished by the presence of a young American bass, Franco Ventriglia, making his career in Italy. I had wondered what had become of him, and discovered in Stamford that he has been singing with the company there, as Oroveso, Basilio, Raimondo, Sparafucile, and now Barak in "Turandot"—a small role that he made vivid. Altoum in this opera is also a bass; Gregory Stapp sang too loud, pumped up his voice into imprecision. Darren Keith Woods was a deft, dapper Truffaldino, the principal mask. Deborah Lancman's Adelma was an attractively sinuous leader of "Greensleeves" and a sparkly slyboots in her duet with Turandot.

Arvin Brown's production was simple and straightforward—less imaginative and less detailed than one expected from the Long Wharf director. Ugo Nespolo's scenes were colorful flats dulled by being set within a black box—black backcloth and wings—that made black the dominant color of the evening. Laurence Gilgore's conducting was alert and accomplished. Busoni calls for a very slow first-act curtain starting to descend ten bars before a C-major chord resolves a strange, pianissimo progression, broken by silences through which the chorus murmurs Calaf's question to Turandot: "What is the foreign prince's race and name?" The progression was not allowed to resolve; the moment the curtain began to move, the audience broke into mindless, unmusical applause. The opera—for no good reason that I could learn—was sung in an Italian translation. Busoni's original German or Edward J. Dent's English translation would surely have been preferable.

The Palace Theatre holds about fifteen hundred. Stamford is closer to New York than Glyndebourne is to London, and it's easy to get back by train after the show. The company's next performances are of "Cherubini's 'Medea' " (not his "Médée," but the Cherubini–Franz Lachner–Vito Frazzi–Tullio Serafin "Medea," translated from French, via German, into Italian), with Gilda Cruz-Romo, in March, and "La Bohème," with Veronika Kincses and Vyacheslav Polosov, in May.

WHILE Busoni's "Turandot" had its American stage première, Gian Carlo Menotti's "Goya" had its world première, at the Kennedy Center, done by the Washington Opera. It was given five performances. I heard and saw it on television two weeks later. The medium diminishes works whose physical impact is important. (It enfeebles the public scenes of "Faust" and "Aida.") But, provided that the director is sensitive, the technical crew in the theatre skillful, and the equipment at the receiving end good, it can also, with its closeups, heighten episodes that in a big theatre lose specificity. The Met "Lulu" in the Met and the Met "Lulu" on television were complementary presentations, each with its particular strengths. "Goya" is not an opera on a grand scale but one closely focussed on two principals: Goya, a tenor role written for and created by Placido Domingo, and the Duchess of Alba, a mezzo-soprano, who in Washington was Victoria Vergara. Closeups of Mr. Domingo revealed the sincerity that marks all he does. Closeups of Miss Vergara enhanced the expressive power of her strong, beautiful features. On the whole, one seemed to be getting a pretty good idea of the opera.

Menotti was his own librettist, and not an able one. In a rowdy Madrid tavern, Goya meets the Duchess, who has come there in search of adventure, disguised as an Alba chambermaid; she offers to pose for Goya the next day, with or perhaps without clothes. Goya goes to the Alba palace and discovers that his model is the Duchess herself. That's Act I. Act II is a buffo scene at court, with Charles IV and Maria Luisa as broad caricatures. The Duchess arrives to present her new ladies-in-waiting; they all wear dresses identical to the Queen's, of which she is so proud. Goya is suddenly attacked by deafness, and this episode is theatrically striking: mouths continue to open and close, and dancers to dance, but the only sound heard is a high tinnitus from the fiddles. (Smetana's E-Minor Quartet is a model.) Act III is two death scenes. The offended Queen has poisoned the Duchess; with her lover, she comes to the deathbed, learns that the Duchess has left her jewels to the servants, and makes off with both the will and the jewels—even a necklace torn from the dead woman. Finally, around the aged Goya some of his genre scenes, *caprichos*, war paintings, and black paintings are given animated representation, and his young self arrives to tax the dying man with having cared more about art than about life: against oppression by church and state "you were fighting with a brush." It's a serious theme—that of Hindemith's noble "Mathis der Maler"—here glibly treated and resolved. A vision of the Duchess arrives, to say, "You more than paid the ransom that frees the shackled soul. . . . Receive your crown." Goya says, "O Art, O Beauty. . . . My only truth my only Love. Pity the artist's humanity and lead him to God's perfection," and he expires.

John Ardoin's "The Stages of Menotti" (Doubleday) begins, "Somewhere in the world, virtually every day of the year, music by Gian Carlo Menotti is performed. . . . In this century, Puccini is the only operatic composer to rival him in number of performances." However distasteful, cheaply emotional, and—in the later works—ill-made one may find the scores, Menotti cannot simply be ignored. But the music that is constantly performed must be, for the most part, his earlier operas, up to "The Saint of Bleecker Street" (1954)—and especially "The Medium" (1946), "The Consul" (1950), and "Amahl and the Night Visitors" (1951). Those three pieces work. Even people of austere taste cannot help responding to them. Successful operas that go on being done merit examination. Since "The Saint of Bleecker Street," seven more full-length Menotti operas have appeared, and nine shorter dramas, six of them children's operas. In "The Unicorn, the Gorgon, and the Manticore" (1956), a madrigal opera, there is lively vocal writing. I found "Juana la Loca" (1979) more arresting than most people seem to have done: the music is so thin, so "undercomposed," that its very leanness proves attractive. In the others of the sixteen which I have encountered, there have been episodes of happy musical invention, some singable tunes that slip down easily, and some effective theatre strokes, but all has been spoiled by glibness, triteness of sentiment, verbal and musical clichés that make even honestly felt emotions ring false. Menotti,

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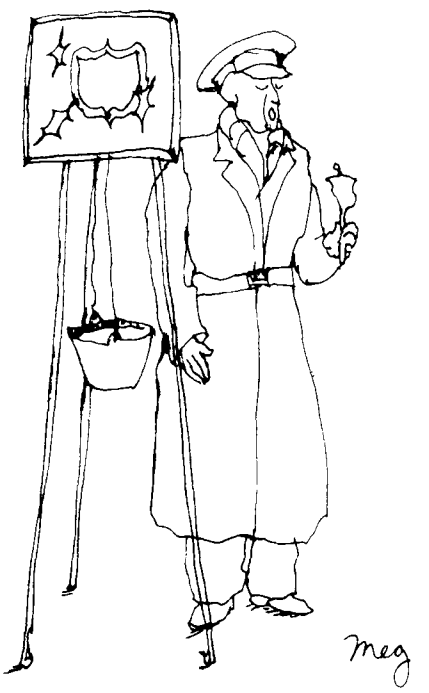
who was seventy-five this year, is a complicated person, as artist and as man. John Gruen's "Menotti" (Macmillan) records the mixed feelings of people who have been close to him. And I, who met him when "The Consul" was first done in London (where we had friends in common), in 1951, and at early Spoleto festivals (where creators, performers, audiences, and critics thronged the little hill town as one community), have mixed feelings, too. For years, I have not admired his work (he makes passing, playful allusion to that in his opera "The Boy Who Grew Too Fast") but have not felt easy about the almost gleefully contemptuous dismissal that it generally receives. Within the schlock and the shoddy there's a genuine, generous desire to reach out, to touch people, to say something that matters, to give something to the world. But all goes wrong. The artist seems almost self-destructive. What may have begun as a good, even an elevated, idea is somehow trivialized in the working. The aim drops low. The execution becomes slapdash and hasty. Anything goes, in words or music. "Goya," which might have been a serious and stirring opera, emerges as platitudinous trash. The music—sometimes pale echoes of Mussorgsky, sometimes short-breathed post-Puccinian lyricism—takes every easy way out. The forms collapse. The only surprises for a listener trying to anticipate what will happen next are provided by measures even more banal than he predicted.

The production, directed by Menotti himself, designed by Pasquale Grossi, and conducted by Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, looked handsome. It should have been handsome; it was said to have cost well over a million dollars.

Giovanni Simone Mayr, a Bavarian who settled in Bergamo, was Italy's leading composer before the meteoric rise of Rossini. Many of his operas held Europe's stages—among them "Medea in Corinto," composed for Naples in 1813, to a libretto by Felice Romani. Isabella Colbran sang the leading role there (the young Malibran is said to have played one of Medea's hapless children); Giuditta Pasta sang it in Paris and in London (Henry Chorley left a vivid account of Pasta's Medea); and in New York in 1969 it was sung by Marisa Galvany, at a Clarion Concerts performance that was later recorded (on Vanguard). That fiery performance confirmed an 1826 opinion of Mayr's style as "partaking of the dramatic vigour of Gluck, and the pathos and spirit of Mozart." Mayr was a bridge between Gluck and Rossini. Donizetti, for eight years his pupil at the charitable music school Mayr founded in Bergamo, revered him as a second father. He taught the Italians a fuller, richer use of the orchestra. He knew Haydn's and Mozart's music, and brought it before Italian audiences both at concerts and—as was rather startlingly demonstrated when Clarion, last month in Alice Tully Hall, gave the American première of Mayr's G-Minor Requiem—by embedding it in his own scores. Mayr wrote some seventy operas but even more church music; over six hundred sacred pieces, ranging from Masses to single movements, have been counted. Only one of them, the G-Minor Requiem, was published, in 1819. When Newell Jenkins, Clarion's music director, was preparing his performance, he noticed that the Amen chorus of the Lacrymosa is a transcription, in doubled note values, of the chorus that closes Haydn's Te Deum for Maria Theresa (which was published in 1802). And since, in the words of the program note, "a composer as capable, fluent, and prolific as Mayr did not need to resort to blatant plagiarism," Mr. Jenkins concluded that it was "very likely" that the Requiem was intended as a memorial to Haydn, who died in 1809. (That year, Mayr also published a short monograph on the composer.) It is a pleasing idea but leaves one asking why, in that case, the Requiem should also contain melodies by Mozart (which the program note did not mention). The tenor soloist sings "Liber scriptus proferetur" to a tune familiar as "Non più di fiori vaghe catene discenda Imene ad intercciar"—the start of Vitellia's rondo in "La Clemenza di Tito," over the same bass. Later in the movement, Mayr's flute plays the striking figures that, on Mozart's clarinet, punctuate the middle section of Sextus' aria "Parto, parto" in that opera. In a later movement, "Preces meae," the tenor returns to Vitellia's rondo and sings her "Chi vedesse il mio dolore," the fast section, to the words "Voca me cum benedictis." The borrowings—to use the word applied to Handel's regular appropriation of other men's melodies, and sometimes whole movements—can hardly have been intended to pass unnoticed. "La Clemenza di Tito" was published in 1809; it was performed in Naples that year, and at La Scala in 1818. Mayr does not, like Handel, repay his debts with interest—make more of musical ideas than their inventor did. His "Medea in Corinto" was plainly influenced by "Don Giovanni," and, as Winton Dean remarks in the New Oxford History, "Mayr had a faculty for carrying his imitations to the point of plagiarism." These Requiem passages, however, sound more like deliberate quotations. Someone who knows more of Mayr's sacred music must tell us whether such quotation was a habit with him or whether in the Requiem it serves some special purpose.



The Requiem is a substantial piece, nearly a hundred minutes long. There are fine things in it: an impressive start; a Dies Irae that grows from ominous mutters through a Gluckian to a Rossinian storm; the Last Trumpet represented by solemn octave F's from trumpets, horns, and trombone; drama in the Libera Me. There are also passages that are hardly more than small change of the time disbursed by a lavish hand. The scoring, as in "Medea," is careful and thorough, with lively woodwind writing more Austrian than Italian. The writing for the solo voices is demanding but not showy. The soloists of the Clarion performance were Kaaren Erickson, Lucille Beer, Robert White, and Richard Crist, none of them remarkable, and the choir was the New Amsterdam Singers.

—Andrew Porter

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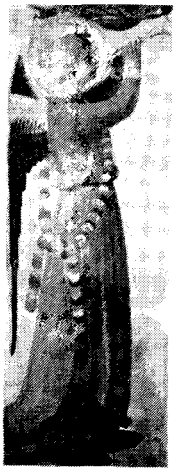

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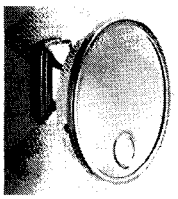

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BOOKS

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

WEST OF ROME, by John Fante (Black Sparrow; $20 cloth, $10 paper). Two first-person novellas by this Colorado-born novelist, short-story writer, and screenwriter, whose career spanned fifty years (1932-82). The longer, and weaker, novella, "My Dog Stupid," is as much about the narrator's late-lamented pit bullterrier Rocco as it is about the eponymous Akita that his wife first mistakes for a bear. It is also about the narrator's four beastly offspring, whose anti-social antics are less forgivable than the Akita's. Too much time is spent in disposing of the four, but the story's last pages, featuring a doomed whale and a pig along with the pit bull and the Akita, are worth the wait. "The Orgy," set in Colorado in 1925, when the narrator was ten, describes what happens when his father and a fellow-bricklayer—an atheistic southpaw with a voice like sheet metal—become part-time gold miners (or, rather, gold-mine owners); but the best, early pages feature a black hod carrier, nicknamed Speed, who does more than dabble in penny stocks.

GENERAL

ON MODERN MARRIAGE AND OTHER OBSERVATIONS, by Isak Dinesen, translated from the Danish by Anne Born (St. Martin's; $12.95). This short essay was written in the mid-twenties as a long letter to the author's brother Thomas; he was in Europe, and she was in Kenya. Her husband, Baron Bror von Blixen-Finecke, was insisting on a divorce that she was loath to grant. At the same time, her lover, Denys Finch Hatton, did not take their liaison as seriously as she did. This work may be most usefully read as an element in Isak Dinesen's biography and an index to her personality; its peculiar mixture of "new" ideas (eugenics, birth control) and traditional ones (the importance of the aristocracy) seems very much of its period. Her imaginativeness, which exaggerated the qualities of two mediocre men, was not as well deployed in social commentary as it was to be in her fiction and memoirs. She is extremely attractive, though: one feels her gallantly denying her grief and seeking to conquer it by thinking.

SKELETONS FROM THE OPERA CLOSET, by David L. Groover and Cecil C. Conner, Jr. (St. Martin's; $15.95). One chapter anthologizes composers' comments on other composers (Wagner on Verdi: "Pig"). Another discusses the dullest operas in the repertory (Cilèa's "Adriana Lecouvreur" probably takes the prize). Besides their disrespects, the authors pay some respects, too: they celebrate Geraldine Farrar's impressive performances in silent movies and argue on behalf of a few neglected operas. This frolicsome book can mean little to readers who are not already well-instructed opera fans; for those who are, though, it offers great fun and further instruction.

MYSTERY AND CRIME

TRAITOR'S BLOOD, by Reginald Hill (Countryman; $16.95). Antonio Lemuel Ernest Sebastian Stanhope-Swift, 6th Viscount Bessacarr, aged forty and a fugitive arms dealer hiding out in Venezuela, is inveigled back to England and pressured into undertaking the assassination, in Rome, of his traitorous and estranged father. The violent deaths that Mr. Hill throws in his wake and way are almost beyond reckoning, and they are effected by almost every possible means, including a toasting fork. Lem, as the Viscount likes to be called, tells his own story —a story that is ludicrous in the extreme—and he tells it in a manner only too appropriate: " 'Spare me the political history,' I grated." Mr. Hill has given us some good thrillers in the past, but here he misspeaks.

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Should damaged equipment be spotted from the air, local line crews are dispatched to the trouble area to make necessary repairs, thus preventing power outages and possible song, dance and pantomime by Moorefield Elementary School
—*Moorefield (W. Va.) Examiner.*

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PROFESSION: President and CEO, World Gift Distribution Network.

HOBBY: "When you only work one day a year, you need a lot of 'em."

LAST BOOK READ: The Book of Lists, David Wallechinsky, et al.

LATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT: Determining who's been naughty or nice.

WHY I DO WHAT I DO: "There'd be a lot of unhappy people if I didn't."

PROFILE: Jovial, ubiquitous, philanthropic. "He travels fastest who travels alone."

QUOTE: "Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night."

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